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MESMERISM PROVED TRUE,

AND

THE QUARTERLY REVIEWER REVIEWED.

BY THE REV.

CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSHEND, A.M.,

OF TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

"Weak and thoughtless reasoners are often influenced by hearing a great deal urged . . . in support of some conclusion; *i.e.*, a long chain of which each successive link is weaker than the foregoing; instead of (what they mistake it for) a cumulation of arguments."—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY'S *Logic. Of Fallacies.*

"Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee."

SHAKESPEARE.

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To

DR. ELLIOTSON IN PARTICULAR,

AND TO

THE LOVERS OF MESMERISM IN GENERAL,

This Book

IS DEDICATED BY

HIS AND THEIR EARNEST WELL-WISHER,

CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSHEND.

CONTENTS.

	page
Dedication	iii
Preface	vii
Inadequacy of the Antimesmeric Article in the *Quarterly Review*, and the difference of its language from that of a lover of truth	1
Unsuitableness of the Prothesis, or Cat's Paw, for the Reviewer's purpose	7
Mismanagement of his Theory of Suggestion	11
Failure of his illustrations from natural facts	31
Failure of his illustrations from artificial facts also, and his consequent unfitness to teach us	49
His refusal to be taught by us	68
Present state of public opinion on Mesmerism	110
Consideration of Mesmerism itself	124
The Theory of Mesmerism, Spirit-rapping, &c.	156

PREFACE.

Dear Reader,—

Of course you are sufficiently versed in the mysteries of Author-craft to be aware that *Preface* is a misnomer, a paradox, a cart-before-the-horse sort of business; briefly, that *Preface*, though it flames in the index of the book, was really written after it, and, with all its pretence of vanward-ship, is, in fact, the "sullen rear," which

"Comes with its storëd thunder muttering up."

If no-how else, you cannot but have learned this last-shall-be-first of literary usage (together with much other information, or it is your own fault) from the great Serials of Mr. Charles Dickens, who, of necessity, sends forth—bound up with the last number of the work—what is hereafter to stand as Preface, namely, one of those touching and affectionate farewells to the Reader which make him long so anxiously for another meeting with the Author, whose last production is invariably his best.

This custom, though founded on a fiction, is all very proper and necessary, and, like many other fictions, fulfils its purpose better and more gracefully than many a clumsy truth. For the purpose of a Preface is to tune Author and

Reader to the same key—and there is nothing puts two parties in tune together like a bit of familiar chat: and what am I—the Author, and you—the Reader, to chat about, if not about *the book*, whose existence is a fact which you hold in your hand; and how am I to chat with you about my book if I do not know all about it?

Yes! I know all about it—and *that* is precisely the reason why, having written my book, I want to be beforehand with it in your mind. There are certain ideas about it, which I want to glide in as *avant-couriers* of my intentions; for appearances are deceitful, and you, dear Reader, might read me through, without reading through me. And such a *mal-entendu* might happen even to a person of *your* penetration, if some earlier whisper than mine, coming from some great gowk of a rival bibliopole, or some serpent-enemy, were to hiss in your ear, "Stupid book—all controversial! Polemics are out of fashion! Flimsy thing of ephemeral interest,"—together with such other amenities as hostile powers know cannily to put about the field of literature.

I then, hoping to be first in the field, declare to you that this book is *not* controversial, is *not* a mere running-a-muck at the opponents of Mesmerism. As to its being of ephemeral interest, it is not for me to speak: but I have not *meant* it to be so. I have taken the Quarterly Reviewer as a mere peg—a lay-figure—whereon to hang such draperies of thought as have been accumulating in the wardrobe of my brain for some years. I *seem* very wroth, I dare say—perhaps I *am* so—but *not* with a personality. If my work is controversial, it is because it treats of the great controversy of the age: if I am wroth, it is abstractedly at the ill treatment that Mesmerism has received from a constant begging

of the question and prejudging of the cause. Passionless as a pleader, I avail myself of the illogical attacks of the enemy. And what opportunity better than the present?

The *Quarterly Review* may be considered as a *resumé* of all that can be most subtly urged against Mesmerism as a special power, and is no doubt the best that can be said on the side of our opponents. And what particularizes the present moment is, that this is the first time our adversaries have theorized—a fact of twofold significance. It is evident that the phenomena (now fully acknowledged) are so important and remarkable, as to *drive* the Anti-Mesmerists to Theory: it is also evident that, by rejecting our Theory, they are driven out of their entrenchments into a very weak and exposed position. "Oh that mine adversary had written a Review," might we once have substituted for Job's exclamation. *Now* the Review *is* written. "Non erit emisso reditus." We have the thing in black and white, and we behold the utmost of which prejudice is capable, when it is strained

> "To that worst pitch of all, which bears a reasoning shew."

I consider this, therefore, an era in the history of that world-wide thing, Mesmerism.

Its facts are acknowledged—but they are referred to "Suggestion," and "Dominant Ideas;" and so fallaciously is this done by the Quarterly Reviewer, that persons, who are accustomed to be led by their Review as by something infallible and godlike, may be, in the present instance, beguiled into utter confidence in their oracle—more especially as that oracle, making use of its own lever of Suggestion, says, "We hope before we have done to bring our readers to

the same conclusions"—namely, as the Reviewer's own. But even this were little, if it were not true that the Suggestive Theory really embraces some general objections to Mesmerism as a specific agent, that cannot but present themselves to every mind, and most of all to the mind of a Mesmeriser. In answering, therefore, largely, and at the same time particularly, the *Review*, I am answering whatever can be most urged against Mesmerism for all time. My plan, in this, has been twofold. I have first shewn abstractedly, and without reference to our own peculiar class of facts, that Suggestion—even when most cunningly put—will not cover the case; that "the bed is shorter than a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." I have, in the second place, shewn by perfectly attested facts, that there are phenomena in Mesmerism which are wholly incompatible with the Suggestive Theory. My work has neither been needless, nor is it of transitory application. Unless I had so cut off the heads of the hydras and so seared the necks of the beast, we should have had the growths of fallacy and chimera for ever springing anew.

Do me justice, then, Reader, as to the motives which have drawn me forth upon what seems a controversial arena. For the love of Truth and Mesmerism I have come forward. Dare a man be silent, when Truth bids him speak? Dare a sincere man agree with the miserable Fontanelle, who said, "If I had my hands full of truths, I should take good care not to open them?" Embracing a totally different policy, I was resolved, in writing my book, that there should be, as far as in me lay, no "*suppressio veri*"—that most cowardly of lies. Though some may think I have not stopped short this side credulity (as I yet trust I have), I was determined

not to be too grand and philosophical even about Table-turning, but to tell clearly what I thought of that and other new phenomena of the day. Not that I have wanted counsellors to silence, and the

"Be by your friends advised,"

which always would impede the execution of a sincere purpose.

"Oh," said one, "let me entreat you to write nothing about Table-turning! You have already enough on your shoulders as to Mesmerism."

Another, to hinder my rash zeal, sends me every squib that appears against Mesmerism, (a great deal of which I have made use of in the service of the same,) and, when told, "This is hardly polite towards Mr. T., who is such a champion of Mesmerism," replies, "It is everybody's duty to try to convert a man from the error of his way."

N'importe, I remain staunch to the cause, and dare to believe that it is *I* who shall convert some from the errors of *their* ways. Copying the Reviewer, "I hope, before I have done, to bring my readers to the same conclusions with myself."

At any rate, I look for support to the Liberals of the land. Already, the *Edinburgh Review* has spoken nobly and rationally of the immense body of the facts of Mesmerism and the character of its supporters.* On the other hand, it is but consistent with Tory principles for the Conservative *Quarterly* to build walls against our innovations—seeing

* April, 1850. See also a pamphlet entitled, *The Edinburgh Review, Mr. Cornewall Lewis, and the Rev. Dr. Maitland on Mesmerism.* Baillière, 219, Regent Street.

that we Mesmerists are to science what the Liberals are to politics. We progress.

But both Whig and Tory—both the True Blue and the Drab—have vouchsafed to us the honour of notice, and that is something. We are not neglected: we are stamped with a fiat: we have received our diploma, even though it be conferred on us by a blow. Our knighthood, thus laid upon our shoulders, reminds me of Hartley Coleridge once describing to me, by word and gesture, the knighting of some Sir Timothy Jenkins of the day by William the Fourth, who, not very gracefully holding the sword in *both* hands, belaboured the worthy Alderman (oh, Reader, had you *but* seen Hartley Coleridge's imitation!), and cried out, "Rise up, Sir Timothy Jenkins!"

Yes! however awkwardly we may be inducted into our honours, we shall "rise up" from all the blows that are levelled at us, and, Heaven knows, they have been hitherto given with the flat only of the sword!

Reader, I have said my say, and, shaking hands with you mesmerically and in spirit, I remain,

Your very sincere friend,

CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSHEND.

Lausanne, Feb. 8, 1854.

THE QUARTERLY REVIEWER REVIEWED:

OR,

MESMERIC AGENCY

PROVED BY FACTS.

To the article in last September's *Quarterly Review*, which is headed, "Electro-Biology and Mesmerism," I would append the word *inadequate*. Other faults it doubtless has, but this is the capital fault—it does not meet the subject.

"'*What are we to believe?*' as to Mesmerism, Electro-Biology, Odylism, Table-turning, &c.," asks the Reviewer *in limine*; and the querist becomes himself respondent by declaring *ex cathedrâ* that all the phenomena which can be ranged under the above heads may be referred to the principle of Suggestion. This sounds well, and, if it a were a great satisfactory generalization, would be accepted by me with pleasure: neither would I quarrel with its want of novelty, nor call it a mare's nest, solely because the principle itself is known to the merest smatterer in metaphysics—for indeed all great discoveries are simple, and apparently obvious: but, in this case, do what I will, I cannot take the first step with the discoverer: I look vainly for the first link of the chain: in short, the generalization seems to me defective. Even supposing that all the phenomena of Suggestion run parallel with the phenomena of Mesmerism, &c., (which is enormously far from being

the case,) I cannot accept Suggestion as the *primum mobile* of the train of facts called Mesmeric. I feel, while the Reviewer talks to me, as I did when once a mechanician was telling me that he had invented the Perpetual Motion, was shewing me the machine, and demonstrating to me that it was infallible and would go for ever—with this small proviso, "if only once you could get it to go." In fact, where I find the *hiatus valde deflendus* in the Reviewer's reasoning is in the gap between the Cause propounded and the Effect that is said to succeed. "Suggestion" is to me the Chaos, which the philosopher with much self-complacence declared to be before all things, and I—unlearned disciple that I am—ask, "and chaos whence?" True—all first causes are hidden: but the mind feels satisfied when it has at least mounted to a certain Unity—when it has traced the divergent threads of a circling and apparently entangled web of facts to a palpable centre, whence, without a flaw or gap, the phenomena are felt to radiate—when thought can run both up and down the line, and pronounce that Induction and Deduction are alike faultless and infrangible. Such a centre to the physical phenomena of the universe is Newton's principle of Attraction. We can trace it up from the dust beneath our feet, and downward from the farthest twin stars which, if blotted from the creation three thousand years ago, would still impress their image on the astronomer's vision. Yet even in this case there may be something ulterior to Attraction: only the mind does not ask for it. And why? We feel that, in attributing a mass of phenomena to attraction, the Axiom, "every event must have an adequate cause," is kept inviolate;

the conditions of reasoning are fulfilled, and the requirements of the mind satisfied. Not so in the case before us. The phenomena do not radiate satisfactorily from their proposed centre; and the mind, when told that the principle of suggestion accounts for mesmeric wonders, is irresistibly impelled to ask, "But how?"

But let us examine what the Reviewer has to say for himself—whether he has so dealt with the question which he professes to elucidate, as to warrant our placing confidence in him as a loyal and logical investigator. "Well begun is half ended," says the old proverb. Let us see how the Reviewer begins. Not auspiciously, it must be owned. He sets out in a spirit the reverse of philosophic; for he sets out discourteously and dogmatically. One of his first assertions is the following: "To the class of earnest and vigorous enquirers, whom the true philosopher, whatever be his pursuit, welcomes as his most valuable coadjutors, the mesmerists and their allies have ever shewn a decided repugnance."

This is not the language of a humble lover of truth. To discredit one's antagonist is an easy way of knocking him down. But is the assertion true? I propose an amendment—"To the class of prejudiced and lax enquirers," (amongst whom we may perhaps discover the Reviewer himself,) the mesmerists have ever shewn a decided repugnance." There is, in fact, a class of pseudo-philosophers, of men of science falsely so called, who decline to enlarge the narrow boundaries of their limited experience by admitting any new principle into their vocabulary. Such men cannot step beyond the A, B, C of science. Routine is their existence. For

them every new term is a bugbear. Yes, every new *term*—more than any new *fact:* for as long as they can refer new facts to old principles they seem to be content. An old vocabulary is all they want. Range a multitude of singular phenomena under the head of Suggestion, and they will not be disturbed. Suggestion, at least, is an old term, and sounds safe. But once speak of Mesmerism, and they are fearfully agitated. The unhappy word seems to have the same effect upon them as a red rag upon a bull. It excites them to fury. Shakespeare's adage, "What's in a name?" fails here. There seems to be *much* in a name—for the facts are not denied: only if we attribute them all to Suggestion, they are to be interesting, well-behaved facts. But the moment they are referred to Mesmerism, they become suspicious, ill-odoured, ungenteel facts. To persons who thus quarrel with a name the mesmerist *has* "a decided repugnance." How are we to please them? Once we called our science Magnetism. Then, in deference to them, who urged (indeed justly) that we could not identify our agent with terrestrial magnetism, the thing became "Animal Magnetism." No! Magnetism at all was an assumption. To hint at electricity or galvanism was high treason; for, though it is believed that we move our arms and legs by a kind of vital electricity, and that the brain is a sort of galvanic battery, yet, when we mesmerise, some Professor Twaddle will be there with his electrometer, and will demonstrate to admiration that not a spark of electricity scintillates from those bodies, which yet crackle with it when we brush our hair or pull off a silk stocking. At last, we thought we had hit upon a name to which *no* objection could be

raised. We generalized our phenomena under the title of Mesmerism. Surely this ought to be an inoffensive word. It assumes no Cause, known or unknown: it simply recalls the name of him who certainly first discovered how to *induce* at pleasure phenomena—some of which were new, others of which had only appeared in rare cases and at rare intervals. But, alas! we are not allowed to name our phenomena at all! These singular A, B, C, D,-arians will only be content when they baptize the phenomena themselves! Be it so! Only let us take care that *their* name be not a worse misnomer than magnetism or anything else. We demur to the suggestion of Suggestion, and with those who think it an adequate cause we do not coalesce. *Not* indeed because we find their inductions rigorous, but, on the contrary, lax and inefficient: *not* because we would shrink from accompanying any man of earnest thought upon an onward journey, but because we decline going round with the dogmatizer in a vicious circle, like one squirrel after another in a turn-about cage.

Whatever the Reviewer may have done, he has not brought forward a happy amendment to our terminology. He may have written an *ad captandum* article, but he has *not* dealt with the question. He has failed to shew that Mesmeric phenomena, or any of the phenomena which he handles, can be referred to Suggestion as their true cause. This it is my present object to demonstrate—a task not difficult in itself, though rendered somewhat complex by the Reviewer's own complexity of statement. His object manifestly was to obscure his own meaning, or perhaps he did not understand it himself. At any rate

I have to tell him what he means: I have to disentangle his real drift and purpose—to bring out his principle from a heap of inconsistencies; for his article is anything but straightforward. It affects indeed a simplicity of theory, but does in verity exemplify the old proverb, that "the nearest way is the longest about." It attempts so much—attacks at so many points—is so fallacious, and so deficient in true axiom, that to extract its pith and core is not an easy matter.

As far, however, as the Reviewer can be made out, his article consists of a Prothesis, or flourish of trumpets—of a Theory, or Grand *cheval de battaille*—and of Illustrations of the Theory, or a kind of Guy Fawkes procession, which is extremely ragged and disorderly.

The Prothesis is to the Theory what the cat's paw was to the chestnuts, or (to employ another simile) what the Australian savage's throwing-stick is to the rude but barbed spear. It is intended to lay hold of, to gripe, to seize, to direct upon the foe that deadly weapon—the Suggestive Theory. This handle or throwing-stick is—electro-biology, the phenomena of which the Reviewer thinks may be so plainly accounted for by "the concentrated operation of the principle of Suggestion," that it appears to him marvellously, and, as it were, providentially, suited to his purpose—that purpose being to shew that mesmerism is nothing in the whole world but suggestion also.

The grand *cheval de battaille* is Suggestion itself—observe, *concentrated* suggestion—Suggestion at high pressure power—Suggestion charged to bursting and well rammed down.

The Guy Fawkes procession is an attempt at marshalling sundry facts under a double banner, namely, that of Suggestion and of Mesmerism.

What I now have to shew, scrambling after the Reviewer as best I can, is, that his Prothesis does not in reality suit his purpose, that his Theory is inadequate, and his illustrations unhappy.

First—The Prothesis, or Cat's paw, does not really answer the Reviewer's purpose.

What he wanted to do away with was, in his own words, "that exertion of power by one person over another, which is the most suspicious feature of the Mesmeric system." But the Biologic phenomena, so far from disproving the human influence, confirm it. It is not enough for the Reviewer to *assert* that the Biologic phenomena are "induced without a semblance" of such influence. By such an assertion he has involved himself in even Hibernian confusion; got, in short, into a hobble. For observe how gloriously he contradicts himself! Directly after saying there is "no semblance" of foreign influence, he states that the somnambulist under Biology "is entirely amenable to the will of another, who may govern the course of his thoughts at his own pleasure, and *oblige* him to execute any command!" This is shewing no semblance of power, &c., with a vengeance! Unfortunate beginning! which is *(entre nous)* nonsense!

But such is the dilemma to which mere hostile argument ever brings a man. In his blind anger he is sure to contradict himself. Our Reviewer's object

was to crush Mesmerism. For that purpose a stalking-horse was requisite—something at least so far like Mesmerism as to be induced—something so unlike it as not to be induced in the same manner. But, alas! he wanted also an impossibility!—something induced, yet without an inducer—something spontaneous, yet directed by another's will—something self-suggested, yet altogether springing from external suggestion. This phœnix of a paradox was not indeed exactly to be had: so he took the next best thing to it, namely, something which by loose statement, by distortion, by bold negation, and still bolder affirmation, might appear to be like what he wanted—and this something was Electro-Biology.

Now Electro-Biology may be true, or false—may be half charlatanism, or all humbug—may be brimfull of Imagination and Suggestion, or the very contrary. All this matters not a pin, but—to do the creature justice—it is *induced*. It comes *ab extrà*. Its patients do this, that, or the other, at the bidding, at the will, of the operator. It still leaves the question of "power exerted by one person over another" an open question. Even if suggestive in the *law of its action*, it may still be electric, magnetic, or whatever you will, in its *origin*. Prior to its overt development, there may still be an occult antecedent. Between the one who commands and the one who executes there may be a hidden chain of causation, a connecting medium. Even the disc, or the brush, or the back of the patient's own hand, or any object whatever, whereon he fixes his gaze, may be but the *occasion*, not the primary *cause*, of his abstracted state; the instrument, not the *vis motrix*. And all this time you cannot get over the fact that the ope-

rator is *willing*, and *desiring* the effects that are produced. He, the living agent, cannot suspend his thoughts *in vacuo*, or be inert like the material objects which seem to be the proximate cause of the patient's peculiar condition.

Nor does the quickness of the effect produced, on which the Reviewer dwells, militate against, but rather does it make for the theory of a hidden agency. Is the disc, or the brush, or the patient's attention fixed thereon for "even a few seconds," sufficient to account for so rapid a fit of coma, or (setting aside the coma) of waking abstraction; above all, of abstraction of so anomalous a nature as to be wielded by the will of another? Rather does such a sudden message remind one of the rapidity of the electric telegraph, where the wire indeed conveys, but only conveys, the occult power, and where man directs and makes use of them both. At any rate, if the thing be done, the slowness or quickness of its doing is but a question of time, and can in no way affect the principal object of enquiry.

The Reviewer lays great stress upon the fact that many of the Mesmeric phenomena can be induced by other than Mesmeric methods. But why did he not go at once to the ulterior truth, namely, that many of the mesmeric phenomena have shewn themselves without the employment of any methods at all? Methinks this should have served his turn better than the half truth which he has chosen for the confusion of mesmerism. His object being to shew that the phenomena are self-evolved, methinks he had done wiser to have got rid of all extraneous preliminaries whatsoever. Nay, I cannot see how phenomena that are induced by *any* methods of which a

human being is the employer can apply to the present question. Whatever may be their quality, they have been originated, and are wielded, by the presence, the commands, the prescriptions of a human being. There is the man in the room. You cannot get rid of him.

The thing is so plain, that I am almost ashamed to insist upon it any further. Every one must concede, that men in ordinary life may sit for ever by themselves, and be neither biologized nor mesmerised. Indeed, the very words, "Hypnotized," "Biologized," "Mesmerised," imply something different in the cause to any similar state spontaneously occurring. When Van Amberg enters a den with a tiger, wrestles with him, throws him to the ground, in fine, subdues him, you do not doubt that it is Van Amberg who *does* subdue the tiger. *How* he does it is quite a different affair. On this point opinions may differ. Some may say he does it with his eye, by some peculiar influence, partly moral, partly physical: others may think that he achieves the victory through exciting the beast's recollection of former chastisements. The proportion of the immediate force exercised by the great animal-compeller—the *how little* of Van Amberg, or the *how much* of the tiger—how far the man commands, or how far the animal contributes to its own conquest, may be made a theme for argument. But, through all this, that *it is* Van Amberg who is the tiger-tamer, and not the tiger who tames himself, no one dreams of doubting. Nay, only let us imagine the wrath of the mighty subjugator, whose picture graces the walls of Apsley House, should a philosopher arise and say, "Van Amberg! It is not you

who do this. It is the tiger does it all himself!" Similarly, I fear, Mr. Braid may have his doubts, whether he should be obliged to the Reviewer who holds him up to praise on the ground that he had not originated his own wonders. The great Hypnotizers and Biologists of the day, stripped of their wand and laurel crown, may henceforth hide their heads. We need them not. It is the patients who do it all themselves! and yet, without the Hypnotist, or Biologist, the phenomena do *not* occur. Thus have we seen that the Reviewer's handle to his theory does not truly fit the occasion, just because of the man in the room.

Let us now examine with what success our friend (for friend he is, who, by the weakness of his attack, shews the strength of a cause) manages, and lays down his Theory of Suggestion.

In Italics he informs us, that "*A large part of our ordinary course of thought, and consequently of action, is determined by direct suggestion.*"

Why not have said, by *in*direct Suggestion? Does anything *direct* paint that coy and subtle nymph, who, like Galatea, flies to be pursued, but, not like Galatea, to be taken? Alas, Suggestion is not that cut and dried thing to suit a Reviewer's purpose! A truer observer of nature has alluded to the mystery of her birth:—

> "It may be a sound,
> A tone of music, summer's eve, or spring;
> A flower, the wind, the ocean that shall wound,
> Striking th' electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound,"

And another deep poet-philosopher (and who but

such can read the universe?) has thus touched upon the dimness of the motives that determine our actions—

> "Like following life through creatures you dissect,
> You lose it in the moment you detect."

Man's mind, indeed, rarely listens to the obvious: it seldom does what is predicted. Its movements alike baffle control and calculation: the remote, the casual are its aliment and promethean torch.

For instance, in dreams it is not the events of the day that are reproduced, but circumstances of the old byegone time: or, if we can occasionally trace some vision of the night to something heard or seen during the day, we always find that the probable cause of our dream was nothing striking, nothing obvious, but some vague hint, some unimportant saying, perhaps, to which we gave so little heed at the time it was uttered that we have the utmost difficulty to search it out and discover it amidst the noisier and more weightier circumstances of life. Even in our waking dream of existence, what is it that most touches the secret spring of our thoughts, which most influences our actions? Again, not the obvious or the direct. So far from it, all the lessons of wisdom, all the didactics in the world, have not the effect upon us that some chance hint produces. Who has not traced some passion that has ruled his very existence, some haunting thought that has embittered his days, some actions which have been his bane, to the working of some slight suggestion, little meant to hit that mark, to some casual word, perhaps, caught in turning the corner of a street, to something dimly seen, whose very actuality was

doubtful? A most excellent and pious quaker lady, whose name was coupled with all good works, once lamented to me, in candid sincerity, this peculiarity of our singular nature. She told me honestly, innocently, that strange words caught as she was perhaps speeding on some errand of benevolence had a dreadful haunting power upon her mind, which all the resources of prayer scarce sufficed to antagonize.

What means, then, our Reviewer's great thesis about "*direct* Suggestion?" Truly not much. It can mean little more than this, viz., that the most animal part of our nature is under the law of direct suggestion—that the sight of a good dinner suggests that we should eat, and a bottle of wine on the table is highly suggestive of drinking, that when we behold a tree, we say, "There is a tree."

But view suggestion in a wider range, we come to a veiled goddess,—a mystery, which resumes the whole question of man's existence,—a secret, which is to be approached with awe, and scrutinized with reverence. Before her impenetrable shrine, genius and philosophy have bowed their heads. To define exactly what she is, has tasked the powers of the greatest metaphysicians. Even the name of this Isis has been matter of deep deliberation, and discussion not yet closed. Sometimes as suggestion, at others, as association, she meets the ear.*

But *Reviewers* (to give the line as it stands were high treason)

"Rush in where angels dare not tread."

In what an easy, dashing, off-hand manner does

* Dr. Thomas Brown first proposed to substitute the term Suggestion for Association.

the writer of the article on Biology and Mesmerism pounce upon, and dispose of the mystery of our being! Fearlessly he flounders on—

"*Extra flammantia mœnia mundi,*"

no matter whether in his depth, or out of his depth, siezes on poor suggestion in her most vulgar form, bottles her, as Sir Astley Cooper would have bottled an anatomical preparation, in *spiritu vini,* and triumphantly holds her up to view in her *post-mortem* glory.

And I will tell you why!

The Mesmerist's, and still more, the Biologist's commands to his patient, *look like* direct suggestion; and with this superficial, resemblance the Reviewer *(faute de mieux)* is fain to take up.

For he *wants* direct Suggestion, and why should he demur about such a trifle as that Suggestion mostly acts in an *in*direct way? He first makes it, and then takes it; a compendious mode of dealing peculiarly his own. He clips and frames his axioms to the occasion—*pro re natâ*—as the doctors say. But, unluckily, Suggestion of any kind, direct, or indirect, will not stand at the head of a Theory, for this plain reason. It is not a principle, but a law of action. It does not originate, it guides. How Suggestion is suggested, is a problem in itself which resumes the whole of our being. It is properly a vital phenomenon; the very breath of the rational soul; the coherent link which constitutes consciousness and sanity. How warily it must be applied was felt by Mackintosh. Thus he expresses himself regarding it.

"The term Suggestion, which might be inoffensive

in describing merely intellectual associations, becomes peculiarly unsuitable when it is applied to those combinations of thought with emotion, and to those unions of feeling which compose the emotive nature of man. Its common sense, of a sign recalling the thing signified, always embroils the new sense vainly forced upon it."

No one can help owning, that, if it were consistently pursued, so as that we were to speak of *Suggesting a feeling or passion*, the language would be universally thought absurd.

But this absurd, unsuitable thing the Reviewer has done. He applies the word "Suggestion," indiscriminately to any power of impulsion or state of sensation, and makes it signify, at one and the same time, both cause and effect. How much is there on this subject to explain and to guard; to state clearly, and define logically, which the Reviewer chooses to ignore!

How carefully should we distinguish between internal and external Suggestion; terms which the Reviewer mentions, indeed, but which he woefully confounds!

Yet, more cautiously should we draw the line between normal and abnormal Suggestion, and, again, between normal and abnormal methods of inducing a Suggestive state!

Gliding away, like the scuttle-fish, in a cloud of his own ink, the Reviewer does not touch the true question at all, which is, how suggestion, that subtle thing, is abnormally suggested, and, being by nature the most volatile and capricious of essences, is held down, directed, and controlled by alien will.

The fact is, that to an honest view the Suggestion

of common life, and the abnormal Suggestion of Mesmerism and Biology, have very little in common. It is a *dictated* Suggestion that is the marvel: and on this the Reviewer has thrown no light.

Were, indeed, Suggestion that direct and good easy thing which the Reviewer paints it, how beautifully greased would be the stubborn wheels of life! We should only have to Suggest wisdom to politicians, and they would become perfectly competent to deal with the Turkish question—honesty to electors, and not one of them would take a bribe—liberality to bigots, and straightway they would become Christians—obedience to servants, and they would never be malapert—above all, candour to Reviewers, and they would from that time forward write honest articles. Alas, how different is the case! All the tiresome people in the world refuse, like the fly that *will* settle on your nose, to take the strongest hint, which might suggest to them to be off, and reform their ways.

But when we come to the notion of Suggesting sleep, the absurdity deepens. Neither at others' bidding, nor our own, comes the capricious god. In spite of placing before our fancy, biologically,

> "A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by,
> One after one,"

in spite of counting to a thousand, we are a thousand miles away from the manageable state in which we may suggest ourselves into slumber.*

All this is so palpable, that our Reviewer does, in

* Perhaps the Reviewer is the man who advertised in the *Times*, that he had a secret to sell, for enabling persons to put themselves to sleep.

fact, betray a latent sense of weakness in his theory, by the manner in which he tries to patch and bolster it up with other things.

We find in his article a quantity of italicized, and what he calls "important" principles set forth. This method of multiplying his resources does, in itself, argue a vast defect in his first generalization.

A good axiom needs no props, and should stand alone. But of anything that the Reviewer sets forth, we cannot say as Colerigde did of Bishop Berkeley's ratiocination, "Grant him his premiss, and the rest is a chain of adamant."

The following truism may shew of what stuff our friend's syllogisms are concocted :—

"*All determinate recollection involves the exercise of volitional control over the direction of the thoughts.* That is, "All determinate recollection is determinate recollection." A very clever way this, of repeating in the second half of a proposition what was already enunciated in the first. So it is with most of the Reviewer's discoveries in metaphysics.

> "Grove nods at grove, each ally has a brother,
> And half the platform just reflects the other."

But, besides this, the assertions themselves, with all their double-dealing, and plausible iteration, are invariably beside the mark. He gives us dissertations on Suggestion, Abstraction, Reverie, but not one word as to the wonder how these states are prompted, guided, and governed by extraneous human command. Thus, as above, he volunteers the information, that determinate recollection involves volitional control; but omits to tell us how it comes to pass, that volitional control in one person is usurped by another.

But it is difficult to take any one of the Reviewer's sentences without having to point out in it multiplied inaccuracies. Some insidious adjective is always sure to be annexed to some plain noun, in such a way that a wrong idea is slid into the reader's mind. "*Determinate* Recollection" is a combination of words which exemplifies this. How little must the Reviewer have studied the phenomena of his own nature not to have perceived that recollection, like sleep, is very seldom determinate, but comes least when most you call for it. Strange mystery of our being! In this matter of recollection even the great law of Association seems sometimes set aside, something in the same way that exhaustless and ever variable nature causes water to expand under the generally contracting influence of cold. Often and often our utmost striving after a point we wish to remember throws us farther from the mark; and that not because, as the Reviewer suggests, we have not got hold of the right handle or key to the object, but simply because we try to lay hold of *any* key. We indeed know this so well that it is common to say, "I must cease to think of such or such a thing; and by and bye it will come into my head of itself." And it *does* come into the head of itself. Exactly when the Reviewer declares that "the power of recalling even the most familiar ideas is completely *annihilated*,"—that is, when "the mind is left to its own automatic activity,"—precisely then the thing we wish to remember glides suddenly, and without previous association, into the mind. Nay, so much does this occur under the very *opposite* circumstances to those imagined by the Reviewer, that sometimes we start from sleep itself with the desired memory

spontaneously accorded us—with the word that we wanted to recall tingling in our ears, or the fact that had eluded us appearing palpably before the brain.*

The Reviewer, then, mistakes the nature of memory, as much as he does that of suggestion. In either case, there is an occult and indirect action, of which nature reserves to herself the solution. In fact, it may be a problem how far any train of memory or of suggestion may be called "volitional." The question is a deep one, and that it *is* so the Reviewer himself seems to have a glimpse when, subsequently, he admits that "the will is exercised not in *producing* ideas, but in *selecting* from among such as spontaneously present themselves." The whole thing is a vital mystery—a part of the action of life—which is too near us to be scrutinized. How we begin to think of anything, and whether we really can originate any train of ideas, is confessedly the rock at whose foot die the billows of human enquiry.

But this much is plain. With regard to Recollection, as with regard to Suggestion, the Reviewer has made a mistake. There is no law by which you can fetter or predict their actions; they are states of mind —not principles, and the artificial induction of such states of mind is the more wonderful because of their coy and capricious nature.

What means then "determinate recollection?"

* But everything with the Reviewer is artificial. Probably, when he laid such stress on *determinate* recollection, he was thinking of those little books (did he write any of them?) denominated *Aids to Memory, &c.*, where the thing that is to help us to recollect something is more hard to remember than the something that is to be recollected. Heaven help the man that has things cut and dried in the herbarium of his head by the aid of a *memoria technica*.

About as much as "*determined* suicide," which so ridiculously heads some newspaper paragraphs.

Moreover, our consistent Reviewer (p. 539) points out that "in somnambulism, as in dreams, the *memory*, like other faculties, occasionally becomes remarkably intensified." Thus, according to his purpose, not according to any real state of the case, Memory is either held in abeyance, or becomes intensified—in short, blows hot and cold with the same breath. Would that our friend would either blow hot or cold.

Let us pass to another discovery of the Reviewer —one of his sign-points, also painted up in italics with a false sort of emphasis, that reminds one of the proverb, "Good wine needs no bush."

"*If the directing power of the will be suspended, the capability of correcting the most illusory ideas by an appeal to common sense is for the time annihilated.*"

Here again is something that sounds grand, but means very little, and which, besides, has in it a "*quantum suff.*" of error. If it signifies simply, where there is no will, there is no capacity of judgment, methinks the Reviewer might as well have said at once, where there is no will there is no sentient being. But our friend, before concocting his sentence, ought to have pointed out the difference between Will and Volition. "Will," in fact, though it may seem a paradox, has, properly, *no* "directing power"—that is, nothing worthy to be called so. It partakes of the nature of instinct: it is a blind guide —one of those "weak masters," which nevertheless perform the part allotted them by heaven so energetically as never to be absent from our being. Will,

in short, is a vital attribute, which cannot be lost save in death or deliquium.

Here, again, the Reviewer has got entangled amongst the wheels of our complex being; and, like a man who unadvisedly is caught, if only by the finger, in some vast machinery, is drawn inwards amidst the whirl, till he runs the risk of being crushed altogether.

The following seems to be the true state of the case.

Will is to the animal man what the association of ideas is to the spiritual. It is a low kind of intuition that is found in the lowest scale of organic life. A dawn of it is seen even in the plant that turns to the light so pertinaciously that, change disposition as you will, it brings round its leaves again to the desired quarter. Nay, even in seeds, the wilfulness of Will is manifest. They choose their soil, and it is always some apparently chance-sown seed that flourishes best. In animals, Will is strong. I defy you to make a hen lay an egg where she does not please. Now to suspend the action of this law of being were to suspend being itself. Accordingly, in Mesmerism, the Will is very far from being suspended. That it should be *influenced* to the point it is, is a marvel which makes (as usual) *against* the Reviewer, who overlooks, in the very beginning of the sentence, that to suspend (or alter) "the directing power of the will," is an abnormal and astonishing process, which, in itself, has largely to be accounted for.

Volition, on the other hand, is (in its common acceptation) something that includes Reason and Judgment—indeed all the higher nature of man. To say of this nobler sort of Will that its suspension

takes away the power of correcting illusory impressions is but a truism, and a truism loosely expressed. It would be more correct to say, suspend reason, comparison, judgment—all those faculties of which volition is compounded—and you suspend the power by which the mind corrects illusory impressions. How much truer is Milton's account of the phenomenon of illusive thoughts!

> "Know that in the soul
> Are many lesser faculties, that serve
> Reason as chief: among these Fancy next
> Her office holds; of all external things
> Which the five watchful senses represent,
> She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
> Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames
> All that we affirm, or what deny, and call
> Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
> Into her private cell where Nature rests.
> Oft, in her absence, mimic Fancy wakes
> To imitate her; but misjoining shapes
> Wild works produces oft."

We see here no mention made of suspension of Will, because the great philosophic poet knew that the Will, under illusion, is *not* suspended, but that, on the contrary, the framing of illusions shews as much Wilful will as the perception of realities can do: neither is there any talk about Volition, because it is not Volition, but Reason, that corrects illusory impressions. Most philosophical too, and, as it were, anticipatory of Mesmerism, is Milton's account of Satan prompting the dream of Eve. The poet not only makes the Evil Spirit squat like a toad close to her ear,

> "Assaying by his devilish *art*, to reach
> The organs of her fancy,"

but actually hints at a material agent whereby he shall forge

> "Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams."

He cannot, as it were, reach the mind but through the animal frame—an idea thus plainly indicated:—

> "Or if, *inspiring venom, he might taint*
> *Th' animal spirits* that from pure blood arise
> Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, *thence* raise
> At least distempered, discontented thoughts."

Here, indeed, Mesmerism appears in no amiable light: but we know that good gifts may be perverted. Satan will, of course, mesmerise satanically; but, at any rate, in attempting to influence Eve, he goes the right way to work—which is more than our Reviewer does in framing his theory. Thus it appears that, in reality, Will, the simple faculty, is not *suspended*, but *prompted*, whenever it is influenced from without; while volition, the compound faculty under such external direction, is only interrupted because her elements are held in dissolution. She is, in fact, the healthy exercise of the whole mind, and cannot coexist with any abnormal state. The Reviewer's italicized sentence therefore is of the same quality as all his other italicised sentences. It only affirms that to suspend the Judgment is to suspend the Judgment; in short, that what is—is. As to the *how*, there is absolute silence.

Appended to the assertion respecting Will and Illusion, we find this other, which is to clench and confirm the first. "It has been truly remarked, 'nothing surprises us in dreams!'" To this I must answer as did a mathematician, more renowned for intellectual power than bodily comeliness, to a fellow-

professor, who, when setting out on a tour with him and another not very handsome Don, remarked, "On my word, it will be said that the University of Cambridge has sent out, as specimens of herself, three very ugly fellows." "Speak for yourself, speak for yourself, Mr. S——!" cried the indignant lecturer. So say I with regard to nothing surprising us in our dreams, "Speak for yourself, speak for yourself, Mr. Reviewer!" Great as is the authority (I believe that of Lord Brougham) for this canon of dreamland, I venture to say that this is one of the cases where the word "*us*" is the weighty word. "Nothing surprises *us*," means in truth, "nothing surprises *me*." It is not very long ago since I heard the question debated in the presence of one of the great authors of this age, and he was amongst those who declared that he constantly felt a sense of surprise in his dreams. Indeed I doubt whether the whole postulate be not one of those commonplace assumptions, which, as the dictum of a great man, impose upon the multitude. Few are great dreamers —fewer still examine their dreams any more than their waking thoughts—and any assertion about either, if it came from an influential quarter, would by them be taken upon trust. Yet I can appeal to the common experience of mankind, whether it be not a frequent feeling in dreams, "This is such nonsense; I am sure I must be dreaming:" or again, whether the appearance in our dreams of persons who are dead be not generally accompanied by an uneasy sense of their being really in their graves. Our judgment is indeed so far clouded that we are puzzled about the matter: but "surprise" is perhaps the very word to convey our sense of strangeness in

seeing so plainly the friends or foes who, we know, have passed away from this visible world.

But, asks the Reader, why is Recollection to be *determinate*—and why are we not to be *surprised* in our dreams?

I will tell you. It is all to get rid of "the man in the room"—all to eke out the Reviewer's Theory. To prove his point, he wants, not a human being, but a machine—an automatic machine, that shall have all its wonders within itself; that shall be surprised at nothing, not even in its wildest dreams, (if it be allowed to have any,) but shall go off of itself, at less than half-cock. In short, what the Reviewer is covertly egging through at all his article is, to establish one of his grand initiatiory dicta, viz., that all the phenomena under consideration (table-turning included) are "due to the mental state of the performers themselves."

Fatal words—to which the Reviewer has nailed himself down. Unhappy man! In vain he struggles to get over his first false step—

> "He, who of old would rend the rock,
> Dreamed not of the rebound."

Imprisoned in his own theory, tortured by his own assertions, he is bird-limed. Like the starling, he cannot get out! In his constant wriggling aim to lose sight of the "man in the room," how he twists about! To watch the shifts to which he has thus reduced himself, is positively amusing! No phraseology too lax for him! He tell us again in the sign-post fashion, that the *entire concentration of the attention upon any object of consciousness, most wonderfully encreases its intensity!*"

"*Its* intensity!" The intensity of what? Alas for slip-slop! We are left in doubt, whether the pronoun refers to the "entire concentration," or to "the attention," or to "any object," or to "consciousness." To the first we should suppose it must relate, only, that to encrease "the intensity" of "entire concentration" would be nonsense too sublime even for the Reviewer. However, what I suppose he meant to say was, that the more we fix our attention upon any object, the more we *do* fix our attention upon any object—a wonderful discovery no doubt. But what it has to do with leaving anybody who has the attention so concentrated any attention for anything else, is what the Reviewer condescends not to explain. Yet, in Electro-Biology, the attention that is concentrated on the brush, or metal disc, (nay, indeed, not the attention, but the gaze,) only prepares the way to the patient's attending to the commands of the Biologist, instead of to his own inner abstraction. In short, the automaton is not automatic.

It wants a man to wind it up.

Even after the Reviewer's cosmogony is beautifully laid out, he wants, like Descartes, a deity to give it impulsion; but that Deity is to remain on the scene no longer than the Jupiter of the old French song, which runs thus—

> "Il le Lancoit en espace avec son pied dedaigneux,
> Et après il lui tournait le dos."

To slur over this want, a quantity of inapplicable terms are used in the most slovenly way. "Spontaneously present themselves," is, with regard to the phenomena, a pet expression of our writer—a blind,

under cover of which he would retreat from the bare notion of external agency. In this respect he has a curious prudery—a fear that starts at shadows.

In order to shirk the unlucky word "external," he uses as much decent circumlocution as do the American ladies to avoid naming that article of attire worn next to the skin, even though they should happen to be stitching the very garment in question.

So, that he may lose sight as soon as may be of that ugly thing "External Suggestion," our Reviewer glides away to the safer quarters of "internal" ditto.

Safer, did I say? Alas, nothing internal answers his drift! Yet, such is his dilemma, that the moment he comes to something external, he meets with what is fatal to his Theory. Thus, like a pendulum, he is obliged to oscillate for ever betwixt the points, and that as quickly as possible, in order, by the rapidity of his movements, to seem at rest.

There is something dexterous and bold in this strategy which may impose on some persons. To pop a transparent lie (I mean mistake) before the nose, may sometimes answer: for, instead of seeing through it, we may look beyond it, and, from its very transparency, not see it at all. A juggler's tricks succeed best when played nearest to us. But fatal to our Reviewer must prove the consequences of being once found out. "Vainly is the net spread in the sight of any bird." Who does not, with half an eye, perceive, that, to ring the changes upon "automatic trains of thought," and "automatic actions," is, by the very terms used, to shut out whatever is induced *ab extra?*

Another phrase which is used in a slovenly way, that

would almost seem designed, is the expression, "can be induced." We are told (*à propos* of Hypnotism) that "a state of coma, passing into somnambulism, *can be induced* in numerous individuals" &c. "Can be indueed? How? By what? By whom? Surely, not by that mysterious individual, Mr. Nobody, or by that other curious agent, Not-no-nothing-at-all!

The very word "induced," is not grammar of itself. "Induced by something, or by sombody," we should say in proper *parlance*. But the abortive Psyche, or butterfly of the whole article, that wriggles through various stages of caterpillar and chrysalis, only to come out at last an unhappy silkworm moth without wings, is the attempt to get rid of external agency—*quod impossibile est*.

Such is the Reviewer's bundle of assumptions, which he calls a Theory, and after such a fashion is it put together and expressed. That want of philosophical strictness with which he charges his adversaries, is but the reflection of his own inaccuracy. He does not begin by proper definition; how, then, can he end well?

All he has done, is to string together a series of well-thumbed common-places, which, like all common-places, are but half-truths; and, thereunto, to add a few elaborations of his own, of which it might be said, "What is true, is not new, and what is new, is not true." And with this shew of reasoning, he thinks to settle a disputed question! If the ground of the controversy has been cleared by him, it is in the way immortalized by the pen of Tacitus—"*Solitudinem facit, pacem appellat.*"

Summarily he sweeps away objections, and then

walks over the course. To any reflecting mind, even if it be averse to Mesmerism, the whole article of the Reviewer must appear singularly incomplete.

As to the mighty rout about Suggestion, it is a tale told by—we will not say whom—

"Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

To sum up my reasons for thinking so. Because, in the first place, the Reviewer's sort of Suggestion is not merely inadequate to the work it is called upon to perform, but is not the true thing. It is a false Duessa; an invented Suggestion, dressed up and disguised, and patched and trimmed, to suit a particular purpose. It is mechanical; whereas, Nature's Suggestion is free. It is an artificial thing, excited at will, and commanded at pleasure; while, on the contrary, Nature's Suggestion comes not when called, and is a rebellious spirit which obeys no master.

Secondly,—because true and natural Suggestion, from its mechanical nature, does not suit the Reviewer's purpose.

Thirdly,—because Suggestion of any kind is not a *Causa Causæ*, or *Principium;* but a Law of action.

Fourthly,—because, if you take either the Reviewer's kind of Suggestion, or Nature's kind of Suggestion, you want the intermediate link between the external prompting and the internal state. You want a touch to set the whole thing in motion. You do not fire the train of gunpowder. You do not connect the command and the obedience. And without this intermediate link—this touch—this spark—you leave the whole thing where you found it. You shew neither how a state, in which Sug-

gestion is so rife, can be induced, nor how, when induced, such a state can be governed and managed.

Fifthly, and lastly,—because no Theory can be adequate to resolve phenomena that obey alien Volition, if it does not take into account "the man in the room."

For these reasons, we may safely pronounce the Reviewer's Theory inadequate to the occasion. It cannot even solve the subsidiary Theorems wherewith it is bolstered up. How much less, the whole great question!

In brief, it is no Theory at all; not even an hypothesis; not the least in the world an explanation of anything, but standing itself in need of explanation. In vain has its inventor talked mightily of the "concentrated operation" of his principle. You may concentrate falsehood for ever, but it does not become Truth: nay, it only compresses into double-distilled falsehood. This vehement insisting upon "concentrated" Suggestion only reminds one of an Englishman abroad who thinks he shall be understood by the natives, if he but bawl out (each time louder) his Anglo-French sentences.

Let us then dismiss the Theory of Suggestion from the Mesmeric horizon. Though we may "have still ears to listen to a rational explanation," we cannot listen to this, precisely, because it is *not* "rational." Faulty in the beginning, it resembles those wisdom-teeth, which sometimes are cut with a caries in them, and are better out of the head than in it.

And was it for this that the Organ of the million—the grand collective *We*—was so long in making up its mind?" Was it for this the Reviewer waited till it was "prudent and right to attempt to guide the

opinions of others?" Some people may think he had better have waited a little longer!

Let us now proceed to consider the Illustrations of the Reviewer's Theory.

These may be divided into two sets—the natural, and the artificial; in other words, into such phenomenal states as occur spontaneously, and such as are induced by alien influence.

Under the first head, we find phenomena of Abstraction, of Reverie, and of muscular strength developed under excitement.

Under the second, we meet with our old friend, Electro-Biology, which has already served as a first course, dished up again as dessert, together with such additional garnish as Mesmerism, Table-turning, Table-talking, and Spirit-rapping.

At the first glance it will be seen that neither set of phenomena can answer the Reviewer's purpose. Spontaneous phenomena have nothing to say to the question of artificially induced phenomena; and artificially induced phenomena are *the* mystery which no amount of natural Reverie or Exaggeration of the state of Abstraction can solve. But let us consider this a little closer.

It is plain, that the *more* a man is in a state of Abstraction, the *less* he will be subject to another's control. The various anecdotes related by the Reviewer under this head, though interesting, (as all illustrations of our being's singularities are,) do not hit the mark at which they are aimed. The absent man, who commits a thousand absurdities in his abstracted

fits; who comes down to dinner without his coat; or, on his wedding-day, goes off to a trout-stream instead of to Church, is *not* swayed by the will of another. So far from it, he is hermetically sealed against the action of anybody's will but his own. And the deeper his reverie, the more hopeless becomes the very idea of guiding and directing it by external Suggestion. The absent man is indeed hedged round by impregnable walls. "He refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely;" nor would all the Flappers of Laputa, in some cases, be sufficient to recall him from his own world to even the most modified subservience to another's reasonable will. Happy would it indeed be, both for the dreamer and his friends, if they could dictate to his reveries only half as efficiently as the Mesmeriser to the abstraction of his patient!

The only cases of Somnambulistic abstraction, cited by the Reviewer, which are at all germane to the matter in hand are, that related by Dr. Carpenter of a young lady, who talked in her sleep, and whose dreaming conversations could be partly guided by the external suggestions of her young friends; and that other, of the officer who served in the expedition to Louisburg, in 1798, the course of whose dreams could be completely directed by whispering into his ear. But these cases just leave the matter where they found it; for it is plain that they are rare and unusual specimens of Somnambulistic reverie,—especial cases, the origin of which is as occult as the question in dispute. For, because they are not *called* Mesmeric, it is not, therefore, proved that there is no Mesmerism in them. We see in them the phenomenon of a will dictated to by another

will; of abstraction, though not induced, yet still guided by an external human agent; and of what occult medium that human agent may make use, is, in spite of the Reviewer, an unresolved question.

Here then, as usual, like an unhappy lawyer, our friend calls up witnesses, whose evidence all turns out for the other side. Nor is he more fortunate when he evokes Muscular Energy, developed under strong and sudden excitement, as a competent explanation of the strength sometimes evinced by Biologic, or Mesmeric, patients. Observe the grandiloquence, yet feebleness, of the dictum. "When *the whole energy is concentrated upon some muscular effort*, especially under the influence of an overpowering emotion, *the body seems endued with superhuman strength and agility*."

Now, which is here the emphatic part—the Italics, or the non-Italics? (both are the Reviewer's.) Which are we to take—the crust, or the crumb? Let us take both, with safety to our cause; for neither of them has any relation to the matter in hand. Even biologized subjects are *not* under the influence of an overpowering emotion. Mesmerised subjects are not under any emotion at all. And just in that lies the wonder. Mesmerised persons are calm; they sleep perchance; yet, at their Mesmeriser's bidding, and at that alone, they will raise great weights, withstand the most powerful electric shocks, and demonstrate that they have recovered powers of body which long since, perchance, have been paralysed, or otherwise negatived.

Neither biologized nor mesmerised persons have any resemblance whatever to "Delphic priestesses under Pythonic inspiration," to "Catholic or Pro-

testant Visionaries," to "preaching Huguenots" in France or Sweden, to the "Convulsionaries" of St. Medard, to Methodists at Camp-meetings, to persons dancing under the "Tarentulism of Southern Italy," or the Leaping-ague of Northern Scotland, or to paralytic old women jumping out of bed and rushing down stairs at an alarm of fire—or to any other of the heterogeneous beings so queerly lumped together, as illustrative of developed muscular power, by the Reviewer.

In two important respects the strength of made somnambulists differs from the strength of persons under strong excitement. The strength of the former is developed, not under strong excitement, but at the simple will, or by the mere passes of the person influencing them. And, then, this development of strength through alien influence, instead of fading away as the strength does that is called forth by excitement, leaving the patient weaker than before, may, and generally does, tend to a permanent encrease of physical power, or to a lasting restoration of lost energies. Should any one condescend to enlarge his experience by visiting the Mesmeric Infirmary in London, he would see a number of patients—neither abstracted nor in reverie, nor under excitement—conversing freely with any visiter who may chance to enter, and only having some affected limb subjected to the action of the passes. Yet, on questioning these patients, he will be often told, "When I first came here, I could not move my arm from palsy or rheumatism: I am now able to move it perfectly." "And how long," may the visiter ask, "have you been ill; and how long has your cure lasted?" and the answer may be, "I

was ill for twenty years, and in many doctors' hands; and they drugged me and did me no good. I have been here three months, and am now nearly well."

Let the candid reader observe—here is no pretence to sudden cure. If "overpowering emotion" has anything to do with this development of strength, it surely is of a very gradual kind—a sort of chronic fit of "overpowering emotion" stretching over three months. Here is nothing of the excitement, lasting but a moment, which makes

> "The lame his crutch forego,
> And dame exulting like the bounding roe."

Here is no sudden fright that encreases the physical energies, and sends an old bed-ridden woman down three stairs at a time. Dismiss we the natural phenomena of Abstraction, Reverie, and increased muscular Power, as utterly beside the question.

We will now proceed to examine how far such illustrations of his Theory as the Reviewer has drawn from the artificial states of man prove Suggestion to be explanatory of the subject, or disprove the existence of any ulterior agency; make out, in short, the dictum, that "all is due to the mental state of the performers themselves."

The Reviewer founds much on the assertion, that "recent events" have greatly facilitated the examination of Mesmerism. The "recent events" allude to the marvels of Electro-Biology, Hypnotism, Table-turning, &c., which have lately been brought before the public.

The course of his argument is this. "A large number" of the same phenomena which appear under Mesmerism may be developed under Hypnotism, Biology, &c. Now Hypnotism and Biology do not claim to make use of a hidden agency. Therefore in Mesmerism there is no hidden agency.

There is immense fallacy in all this. The reasoning is wrongly based. It proceeds upon two assumptions, Namely, that like things are identical, and that similar things have identical causes. But did the Reviewer forget the poet's philosophic line,

"Like, but oh! how different?"

or the old saying of the French epigrammatist, "Rien ne se ressemble comme le néant, et la profondeur."

Apparently he did—both in theory and practice—for all he adduces is "like, but oh! how different" to what it should be, and, resembling depth, is real shallowness. But superficial resemblances mislead superficial observers. You cannot, in matters of sensation, carry out the mathematical axiom, "*Things* that are equal to the same are equal to one another;" for this reason, vital phenomena are not straight lines, and are never utterly similar, though, like the leaves on trees, they may appear so. Indeed, if the lemma were once admitted,—that "similarity constitutes identity,"—what confusion would ensue in every art, in every science. Little has the Reviewer perceived how far every one of the bases, which he has used to confound Mesmerism, would go to make a muddle of the whole of human life! Observe how a Cuvier, a Linnæus, plunges below exterior similarities, to reach internal diversities! Observe we

that a similarity between two things may proceed very far—as between a man and an ape—yet so suddenly stop as that the two things shall be more dissimilar on account of the similarity itself. Nay, though a large—a *very* "large—number" of features may be alike in two phenomena, yet it may be precisely the exceptional features, few though they be, which stamp the two with *un*likeness. Again, philosophy has long exploded the fallacious dogma,—that "similar effects must have similar causes." What renders the diagnosis in diseases so difficult? Precisely the opposite lemma. One internal disease will so often simulate the symptoms of another, that a Napoleon, judged to have a diseased liver, dies of a stomach complaint, and, in the autopsy, or post-mortem examination of his body, is discovered to have possessed a liver so sound, that it had almost miraculously prolonged his days by acting as a stopper to the ulcer of the stomach.

For the above reasons, every strict observer feels the greatest interest, not in establishing casual resemblances, but in detecting minute differences, between the features of two apparently similar cases. He knows that the smallest residual phenomena must be accounted for. So acts the mathematician; so acts the astronomer: no smallest fraction of a calculation must be left astray; for that smallest fraction might vitiate the whole sum. And observe we, that the greatest discoveries have resulted from pursuing residual phenomena to their solution. The patience that embraced a term of years in considering the aberrations of the heavenly bodies was rewarded by obtaining the most precious proofs, through the ascertaining of new motions, and compensations, of the stability

of the visible universe. Nay, this generation of astronomers are patiently pursuing the elements of that wondrous problem, viz., the revolution of our whole sidereal system round some general centre—in a circuit so vast, that more than half a century of observation is requisite to prove that the stellar universe is not proceeding in a straight line:—our astronomers, I say, are pursuing that problem not for themselves, but for another generation. That mighty legacy must they bequeath to the extended investigation of their children, or their children's children; for one life is inadequate to ascertain or to compute even one segment of the mighty circle. And are we to be less accurate than the physical enquirer in observing the mysteries of our complex and astonishing existence? Are we to have less patience than he? The wonders of our sentient being are only *beginning* to be scrutinized. Men who have devoted their lives to them stand but on their threshold. How then shall we presume prematurely to give them that fixity which shall circumscribe their further development, and limit us in their progressive investigation and comprehension?

Probably we shall have to bequeath them to the advanced knowledge of even more posterities than are demanded for the elucidation of the mechanical laws of the universe.

Having shewn on what wrong grounds the Reviewer has chosen his illustrations, I proceed to the illustrations themselves.

Electro-Biology first claims our notice. Although, spite of *The Quarterly*, and Mr. Braid's book with the wonderful title (Neurypnology), I have so far placed Biology in the same category with Mes-

merism, as to refuse to rank either of them under the banner of Suggestion, and to assert that the former can never antagonize the latter—because of "the man in the room"—yet am I, by no means, to be understood as claiming for Biology any peculiar honour or approval. Mesmerists do not by any means consider it identical with Mesmerism, but distrust it—*not* because they think it shews that Mesmeric phenomena can be induced without Mesmerism—but because they view it as a bastard and illicit growth of the true power. They conceive that there *may* be some Mesmerism in it; but Mesmerism exerted in a wrong way and to wrong ends. The object of the Mesmeriser is *not* to excite the Imagination, or to act upon the faculty of Suggestion. The Biologist *does* so strongly excite these organs that madness even has, in some cases, been the result.* It is no use to tell the Reviewer that the Biologist acts directly by Will, and by the medium of Will on the brain of the patient—for he does not believe that Will acts out of the body, or by a medium—but the Mesmerist thinks such an explanation of the anomalous distorted effects of Biology at least probable. For this (to him) reason, the judicious Mesmeriser will rather avoid to experimentalize after the Biologistic fashion, how far a man may be brought to forget his own name, or a lady be induced to believe herself a Bishop. Such tampering with humanity he will consider wrong because dangerous. He cannot by any means be brought to believe that

* There is a fearful story of a Biologist, who told his patient to believe himself dead. He never recovered the strong shaping of this phantasy, but died raving mad. How different is this to the calm influence of Mesmerism, exerted to *cure* Insanity.

the following statement, which I translate from a printed bill in French, stuck up at Geneva by an English Biologist, can be anything but absurd quackery, that may do more harm than most other quackeries.

"Mr So and So will make any lady or gentleman forget their own name—will render them unable to repeat the alphabet—will make them believe themselves anything or anybody—will reduce them to complete immobility—take away all their faculties, and render them idiots, &c., &c.—which wonderful phenomena may, it is believed, be turned to uses the most beneficial to humanity—serve to instruct mankind—and, finally, bring about the regeneration of the world." To such high aims the Mesmerist does not pretend, just because he cannot see how reducing people to a state of idiotcy and to bring away all their faculties is to make them clever and regenerate.

Smile then as the reader will, I make haste to assure him that Mesmerism "has no connection with the shop over the way;" and that, not for the old reason, that "two of a trade can ne'er agree," but because we wrote, as little boys, the school-copy, "Avoid bad company!"

What, however, is still more to the present purpose, is, that Biology differs as much from Mesmerism as Judaism from Christianity—yet resembles it perhaps in about the same proportion. There *may be* the same agent, but there is a different development in each. And these two dissimilar reasons are equally potent in rendering Biology an unhappy illustration for the Reviewer. It cannot suit his purpose both because of likeness and unlikeness. The likeness,

which consists in the human agency, and induction *ab extra,* renders it unfit to prop a Theory of Suggestion: the unlikeness, which consists in its adulteration and distortion, bars that through its sides a man should attack Mesmerism.

One service at least the Reviewer has unconsciously rendered us. He has set the difference between Biology and Mesmerism in the strongest light. He has shewn that Biology has on it a broad stamp of suggestive influence which is wanting in Mesmerism: for it is precisely on these grounds that he has chosen the former as a weapon of attack against the latter. Patently, and on the surface, the Biologists (whatever be their *ultima ratio)* use Suggestion largely as a handle to their influence. But all this is the reverse of Mesmerism, or of the methods used by Mesmerists. Again I say, let any one visit the Mesmeric Hospital. Will he there witness the same things as in a biologic chamber? No! He will not see persons straining their eyes, or hear them told they cannot remember their names: he will behold real effects produced by quiet methods—patients recovering their sight, or the health of their nervous system, by the simple passes made in undemonstrative silence.

Briefly—the object of the Biologist is to rouse Suggestion, and to work on Fancy; the object of the Mesmerist is to eliminate them both. The one does not care how mixed and impure are the phenomena which he elicits: the other carefully sequestrates those facts which the accurate observer would wish to examine in their most rigid simplicity. To him, the effects of a pass made behind a patient's back, or attraction from a distance, are worth all the won-

ders in the world into which Imagination and Suggestion cannot but largely enter. So different indeed are Biology and Mesmerism that they will stand apart by mere definition. If the Mesmeric state be defined as a state induced by passes of the human hand (and indeed on the human hand alone a chapter might be written of which Bell never dreamt), then is Biology plainly excluded from the same category.

There is one point, in Biology, on which the Reviewer lays great stress. It is on the Biologic production of certain phenomena, not only in sleeping, but in "wide-awake" persons. The importance which the Reviewer attaches to this fact is every way ill-grounded. It partly results from ignorance of our party's present state of knowledge. "Nobody knows anything but I," is the language of emptiness. Mesmerists have long ago known, together with all the other novelties of the Article in the *Quarterly*, that Mesmerism can be brought to bear partially on the limbs of waking persons—can stiffen an arm or a leg—that the state it induces varies from almost a normal one to a profound and even stertorous slumber. They also know that the fact of patients not having their eyes shut is no more proof of their not being affected by Mesmerism, than was Lady Macbeth's having her eyes wide open considered by Shakespeare as opposed to her being "all the time in a most fast sleep." But the fact is (though, be it observed, the induction of the phenomena without the sleep does not make the induction of the sleep less wonderful), the sleep has years ago been dropped as an indispensable part of Mesmerism. Thousands of mesmerised patients have given testimony to the existence of a power, apart

from sleep, by getting cured without ever sleeping a wink during the application of the Mesmeric processes. The triumphant way, therefore, in which the Reviewer assures us that wonders are performed without the sleep, just as if that meant to say, without Mesmerism, only demonstrates his want of information. Yet more than this. The induction of "rigidity," &c., unlooked for by the patient in a waking state—so "wide-awake" (the Reviewer's own expression) that it puts Reverie and Abstraction out of the question, does, while it knocks down the Reviewer's own props and buttresses, prove an occult force more strikingly than any phenomena could do which were elicited in the sleeping condition.

But, forsooth, the Reviewer imagines that an arm may be stiffened merely by the owner's attention being drawn to it, in the same way that certain organic functions may be impeded by a man's thinking about them. Surely there is here a confusion of thought. Automatic vital emotions, such as the beating of the heart, or the winking of the eyelid, are indeed disturbed by self-attention to them, for this plain reason—that Nature meant them to be automatic: but voluntary motions, such as of the arm or leg, do not fall under the same law; and the interruption of voluntary motion, either through passes or at command, remains a mystery which the derangement of vital functions under self-attention is incompetent to solve. Furthermore, the Reviewer tells us (as the converse to the above) that "an extraordinary degree of power may be thrown into any set of muscles, by telling the somnambulist that the action which he is called upon to perform is one which he can accomplish with the greatest facility."

No doubt of it. Faith works wonders. "Cut boldly," said the Sybil, and the Roman emperor really did cut through the whetstone. But the question is, *how to get hold of the Faith.* What we have to enquire, is, how Faith is wielded by alien Will. Even in the case of the whetstone, we are not sure that the Sybil did not mesmerically impress the Emperor. In all these things, it is not the illustration that explains Mesmerism, but Mesmerism that explains the illustration.

So is it with the other instances which the Reviewer adduces of feats of strength, or exhibitions of muscular weakness under what he calls simple Suggestion. We can never be sure there is not some ulterior agent in the case.

Indeed in the muscular part of his Theory, the Reviewer is as much out of the way as ever. He goes on creating his own facts. For instance, he first asserts that "our sensory impressions are determined by the ideas with which our consciousness may be possessed at the time," (God help us if it were so!) and then exemplifies his dictum by a story of Dr. Pearson exclaiming, when he first poised upon his finger the globule of potassium produced by the battery of Sir H. Davy, "Bless me, how heavy it is!" which "the test of the balance determined to be the opposite of the fact." Here it is plain that, though the globule was not absolutely heavy, it might be so relatively to the expectations of the Doctor. I may say of a pin's head, "Bless me, how heavy it is!" if it feels heavier than I expected; just as I may say of a microscopic insect, "Bless me, how large it is!" if it seems to me a monster amongst its brother animalculæ. But that,

in reality, we are not left by Providence at the mercy of our preconceptions, one very simple fact will shew. We all have experienced the shock through the muscular system which ensues when we lift up a box that had, unknown to us, been emptied of its weight. Instead of finding the box heavy, because we expected to find it heavy, we receive a supereminent impression of its lightness, because unexpectedly we discover it to be light. Our whole arm jars with the recoil. And this fact, which lies within the range of our habitual experience, is peculiarly valuable to the candid observer of nature. It proves that to fulfil our commonest ends we dispense a force of enormous power from the brain to the extremities or superficial parts of the body—a force which is measured by the intensity of the recoil. The same kind of neurometer we have on other occasions. If we bite the tongue instead of our meat, we perceive the astonishing power which we dispense to the jaw. If we are lifting the arm to take up anything and happen to strike against the chimney-piece, we receive a blow which leaves a rather durable token, in black and blue, of the nervous force that is put forth by us every time we lay hold of the lightest object. Such facts *should* strike people, and lead them on another track than the beaten one of Suggestion. Where goes, we may ask, that vast amount of nervous energy, which we put forth every moment? Does it die in itself? But some persons will not allow us to have a nervous energy. Oh no! it is all Suggestion!

And all this time our modest Reviewer strikes in at intervals, while he is recounting the marvels developed either naturally or under Biology, "We do

not pretend to account for these things." Aye, but you do though! and very pretentiously and feebly at the same time!

But nature will have her revenge. It is amusing to see how by unconscious expressions the Reviewer throws scorn on his own little Theory of Suggestion, and covertly acknowledges the occult power which he affects to deride. "The spell-bound subject"—"The infused idea"—"The potent charm," these are phrases which intimate something out of life's ordinary sphere, which confess not only "a spell," but a master of that spell—just as much as talking of laws implies a law-giver. And only imagine—*à propos* of spells—the Reviewer makes the following extraordinary statement:—

"He" (that is, the biologized subject) now "appears to be himself again. Yet he is not so in reality; for his volitional power is still withdrawn from the direction of his thoughts; so that the peremptory command of another exerts its influence over him, even after a considerable interval may have elapsed. We cannot say precisely how long this state may continue; *we have known it to last for several hours*" (my italics), "and we are inclined to think that the biologized subject does not usually regain his proper self-control until he has experienced the renovating influence of sleep!"

And all this is achieved by Suggestion! Verily, there are some explanations more wondrous than the wonders which they profess to explain!

Observe the abiding influence, which lasts for several hours. Is there no occult agency here? Observe how gratuitously the Reviewer descends into the mechanism of the biologized subject's mind, how

boldly he declares that, though he appears to be himself again, he is not so in reality, and how decidedly he gives a reason for this—namely, that "his volitional power is still withdrawn from the direction of his thoughts." Observe how he describes all this with such an inference as suits his own conclusions. Observe, too, the unconsciously stated but valuable fact—namely, that the "subject" is not truly himself again "till he has experienced the renovating influence of sleep"—an admission which condemns that strained, forced thing, Electro-Biology, and contrasts it with Mesmerism, whose subjects, whether sleeping or waking, feel renovated, and twice themselves, after having experienced its influence.

But I might go on for ever exposing the fallacies of the Reviewer. Lest, therefore, I weary my reader, I shall not allow the remainder of his illustrations to detain us long. Nor is there any need that they should. *Ex uno disce omnes.* To eke out his Theory of Suggestion, he has lumped together a parcel of heterogeneous things, some relating to his subject, others not. And none can be said truly to relate to *the* subject, which is in real verity (seeing that it embraces phenomena produced in one person by the agency of another) the influence of man on man. Eluding this, he flutters about the various "recent events."

Unhappy Mesmerism! she is not even allowed the "pas" on the occasion! The Article itself is headed Electro-Biology, *and* Mesmerism; and we have, besides, Odylism, Table-turning, Table-talking, and Spirit-rapping—so heaped together that we may truly say the Reviewer discourses, "*de omnibus rebus*

et quibusdam aliis." The object always is to play upon the old proverb, "*Noscitur a socio,*" in such a way as to degrade Mesmerism. Yet some of the Illustrations are such as Mesmerism might respectably be connected with.

Odylism (odism), for instance, is a most interesting new discovery. I have not seen it tested, but the experiments concerning it, as related by Baron Reichenbach, to whom the merit of first observing its phenomena belongs, appear to me philosophically conducted, and in no way connected with Suggestion. In a general way I may inform the reader that Odism is a discovery by sensitives of luminous emanations streaming, more or less, from all objects, but more especially from metals and magnetic substances. Briefly, it might be called *Newton's ether visible.* As a proof of the existence of a subtle and pervading medium it may be valuable: but, as our present theme is *the Influence of man on man,* it is too extraneous to the question to demand at this time our further attention.

Table-turning, also, though it stands in a very different category to Spirit-rapping, is not just now much *ad rem.* Nor can I see how it illustrates the Reviewer's dogma, that "all the phenomena are due to the mental state of the performers themselves." In the case of the tables, they are manifestly themselves the performers: for they stand in the same relation to those who turn them, as the Biologic subjects to those who sway them. But thus, I suppose, it is. A gentle hint is given to the tables to turn, and, good creatures, they are in such a state of Suggestion, that they turn accordingly.

As to Spirit-rapping, the very name excludes it

from philosophical credence. If once spiritual agency be admitted, where is it to stop? If Spirits are the cause of any visible phenomena, why should not they turn stars as well as tables, and slide at once into the place of Gravitation?

As to whether the tables turn, not merely on the muscular hypothesis, but by a sort of projection of that nervous force whereby a man moves his arm, I (poor credulous Mesmerist!) am sceptical enough (according to the true meaning of the word "sceptical") to hold my judgment in suspension. At any rate I have seen enough to know that the question is still an open one.

"We have now arrived, we are thankful to say," (writes the Reviewer), "at the latest phases of this remarkable series of popular delusions." The sentence, a little altered, will suffice to close this part of my subject.

We have now arrived, we are thankful to say, at the latest phases of this remarkable series of unapt Illustrations of an inadequate and untenable Theory.

But this apparent end to our toils is only the beginning of our labour of love. I appear as the advocate of Mesmerism; and on the way in which this science has been treated, and on the mistakes which have been made concerning it, I now concentrate my attention.

The Reviewer asserts that to *us* is owing the long delay of a final settlement of the Mesmeric question. Thus he expresses himself:—"It is to be attributed to the difficulties which honest investigators long

encountered, through being treated as antagonists by most of those to whom they might effectually have looked for assistance, that they have, until recently, done little to enlighten (!) the public."

Now, first, I ask, To whom does the task of enlightening the public, *de jure* as well as *de facto*, belong?

Manifestly to those who have made Mesmerism their particular study.

It is *they* who ought to teach, to impose their conditions on those who wish to learn. In every other matter of experience it is so. Every branch of science has its professors. Nay, even each department of a branch has its peculiar students. Though Mechanics and Mathematics are intimately connected, we do not go to a Mathematician to learn how to make steam-engines.

And this one fact has been overlooked. Mesmerism is a speciality, and demands a special study.

If there be truth in what I have advanced, then perhaps it will be perceived that a great, a long, injustice has been done to men, who are, in respect to Mesmerism, what electricians are in respect to Electricity. They have made it their study. And, if the subject of Mesmerism have a tithe of the importance which we mesmerists attach to it, it must be made a *specific* study, and they only who have done so, are competent to judge of it, and to speak about it. It has amused me often to hear persons *à propos* of Mesmerism say, "Oh I will consult so and so the Chemist—or so and so the great Electrician—and learn what *he* thinks about Mesmerism. He *must* know all about it; he is such a *great* chemist, or such a *great* electrician." Or again, "I will ask

Dr. C—— all about it. As a medical man, he may be trusted on the subject."

Indeed ! and why ? Art is long, and life is short : and science demands the whole man. That a man should be a great chemist, or a great practitioner, may, therefore, according to ordinary rules, *prevent* him from knowing much about Mesmerism.*

It is true that one reason for the vulgar confusion between Mesmerism and Electricity was formerly in part excused by the early error which assumed a cause for certain phenomena by the cognomen of Magnetism. Men are led by words long after these have been exploded. But it is time the world should know that the Mesmerist studies Mesmerism as Mesmerism, and that he has enough to do in attending to this one branch of natural phenomena. "*Ne sutor ultrà crepidam.*" I deny that the greatest of great big-wigs are entitled to judge of Mesmerism until they have made it a specific study. It is, like all experimental sciences, an affair of experience, and there are a thousand and a thousand things known to the experimental Mesmerist, which never can be known to the rash presumptive judge who dares to decide on what he has scarcely seen *ab extrà*. How would the members of any other science feel if treated to the *Lex talionis ?* What would a Faraday or a Herschel say if a Mesmerist should turn upon them with, " Sir, I never saw plates become electric by revolving—I never detected a comet perturbed by the neighbourhood of Jupiter, and I regret to tell

* There is, however, no doubt that medical men, because of their medical knowledge, will, if sincere students of Mesmerism, have advantages over other examiners of the science. But some Doctors study old precedents—not Nature.

you I think you must be mistaken in these particulars! nay, are very gullible to believe such things!"

But our foes—who, *selon eux,* are so ready to be friends—who at some moments *say,* "Come, let us shake hands and make it up!" but always hold out a pugnacious fist, that more emphatically *means,* "You dirty villain," will not allow us to know our own trade, and (truth to speak) blackguard us most awfully. If I have been sharp on most worshipful, the Reviewer, let him only remember—"Evil communication corrupts good manners." Twelve years have elapsed since I urged Reasons for a *dispassionate* enquiry into Mesmerism. That word has been scattered to the winds. Is this our fault? What is the use of the opponents of Mesmerism crying out to us, "Be dispassionate!" when, all the time, they are goading us with their own passionate scorn? Bear witness such amenities as these, which Locke would have never employed towards an adversary, and of which Newton would have been incapable,—

"Entertaining the lowest possible opinion of the logical powers of the great bulk of the upholders of the Mesmeric system, it has astonished us to find," &c.,—

And again: "It has not been our fortune to meet with a single believer in these higher mysteries who has exhibited the qualities of mind which would entitle his testimony to respect upon *any other* subject in which his feelings were interested."

"Feelings were interested?"—quotha! As if the feelings of our adversaries were not *interested* greatly more *con* than ours *pro!*

The root of all this is the vanity and self-conceit of the Anti-Mesmerists.

From these branch out their errors and our wrongs.

Hence, they undervalue us, and, like that amiable party whom the Psalmist depicts, cry out, "It is we who ought to teach! Who is lord over us?"

Hence, they take no pains to know what we have done, or are doing, or *how* we do anything.

Hence, they do not pay proper attention to our experiments—prejudge them before they have seen them, and have no patience in watching them.

First they undervalue us, because of their own vanity. Yet, I may ask, of what are they vain? A curious question it is why the incredulous of all grades take up so high a position—why those, who confine themselves to what they can touch with their noses, assume airs of superiority over the larger and profounder enquirer. One would think (if the true philosopher were not of necessity the most modest) that it is they who extend their views that ought to look down with pity and contempt upon the narrow-minded and prejudiced portion of mankind. It seems to me that there is little merit in being *borné* —that it is a strange thing to be proud of negation, or (even supposing some men err from an overabundance of the faculty) to exult over a deficiency of imagination. Yet the prosaists, in the world's eye, have the best of the bargain. Reader, do you not know the sort of man who fleers at the genius that goes beyond him? Have you not seen him enter a room with an assured put-all-down sort of air, as if, with Shakespeare's profoundly conceited man he would say,

"I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!"

What a peculiarly derisive laugh he has (it is his chief weapon), and how ready he is to greet with it every observation that steps beyond certain constituted authorities! But,

> "Oh would some power the giftie gie us,
> To see cursels as others see us!"

The true philosopher smiles in silence at this extraordinary pride in a defect—a pride that savours a little of the barbarous—for it is not the European but the Esquimaux who glorifies himself because he has got a club foot.

In fact, what is their boast? To be minus a large and interesting sphere of observation, or to enter that sphere only with the preconceived notions which, in fact, shut to them the charmed circle as completely as if they stood outside it. The true Mesmerist is an accurate observer, ready to avail himself of things old and new. He does not take things known for limits and boundaries, but as roads leading to regions yet unexplored. He has the benefit of past experience, *plus* those actual fields of beauty and wonder which the world's progress opens to the view. Why is he to be sneered at by the *minus* quantity? Is even credulity the most contemptible of all things?

Nay, but the self-conceit, which thinks that no observation can be correct but its own, may be a meaner thing; and may, in the main, lead to a credulity more weak and childish than credulity itself. For instance, he who, stepping not beyond known (or *said* to be known) causes, attempts, as in the article before us, to explain the mysteries of man's

being by a few common-places, must, in fact, have a very huge swallow. Ought he to scoff at the Mesmerist's credulity? Is not this Phyllis fainting away because Brunetta's negro-girl is dressed in a brocade like her own?

And surely to believe in certain external wonders is better than to believe nothing but oneself. Yet, we may ask, what but such exclusive self-credulity could have dictated the following sentence?—

"It has astonished us to find the Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, bearing the honoured name of Gregory, asserting the monstrous proposition that, if we admit the reality of the *lower* phenomena of Mesmerism, the same testimony ought to convince us of the *higher?*" Why, if Dr. Gregory bears an *honoured* name, is he to have no credit for having advanced the obnoxious proposition on well-considered grounds, and for being able at least to bring much testimony forward to prove his point? At any rate the proposition, if monstrous, cannot be more so than some of the Reviewer's own, and is at least more apposite to the occasion.

In the same way, why is Baron Von Reichenbach to be charged with a want of philosophical discrimination? The want does not appear in his most interesting book. The experiments of the Baron seem to have been tried with accuracy and precision. The magnets and other objects were not, as in the case of the biologized subject who saw flames issuing from a magnet placed *before* him in full day, displayed to the sensitives; but the sensitives had to find them out, and indicate their position correctly in a room, from which every ray of light was excluded. There

is therefore no analogy between the cases. But matters stand between Reichenbach and the Reviewer, as they did between Sir Hudson Lowe and the French exiles at St. Helena. "We should have quarrelled with an angel," says Las Casas, "if he had been governor of St. Helena." In like manner, the Reviewer would quarrel with an angel, if he believed in Mesmerism. In such a case, the "honoured name of Gregory," or the reputation of Von Reichenbach, or even the mighty shade of a Locke, could it be evoked from the grave, availeth not, neither would avail. Hear the Reviewer's awful fiat. "To us it is evident, that his (Von Reichenbach's) sensitives were merely individuals possessed of considerable powers of voluntary abstraction!" "To *us* it is evident." Therefore, it *must* be so. Therefore, because the sensitives had *considerable* powers of voluntary abstraction, they found out the place of every object in a perfectly dark room where they had never been before! In short, Tenterden steeple is the cause of the Goodwin sands.

In the second place: the vanity of our opponents prevents them from knowing what we are about, or what is the actual *πού στῶ* of the Mesmerist.

Remark how, in the Reviewer's case, the first step taken for granted is his own amount of information; our ignorance and inaccuracy. With him, all is supposition about us—such a mapping out of our intellectual territories as men make of any *Terra incognita*. It is under the impression of these views that he has complacently informed us of everything we knew before: as if men, whose lives have been devoted to the observation and elucidation of these new mysteries, were to be taught by the Reviewer

and informed for the first time, of things that lie open to the meanest capacity?

There is not one drawback, or impediment, to the accurate study of Mesmerism, which its disciples knew not, and did not take into account, long before the Reviewer's article was even hatching in embryo.

My valued friend, Dr. Elliotson, astonished me in the beginning, when I was but a tyro in Mesmerism, and, perhaps, too ready to be delighted with all I saw, by the checks that he put upon my inexperience. I remember he once took me a round of visits to those persons whom he attended mesmerically—(and to his honour be it spoken, *gratuitously*: for he always has gone on the high principle of never deriving any pecuniary advantage whatever from that science by which he has lost so much): and, that amongst the patients was a beautiful sleep-waking girl, who sang and played apparently by clairvoyance with the notes covered. I was delighted with the phenomena which she exhibited; but what was my surprise, when, on leaving her, Dr. Elliotson whispered to me, "It is sham!" Again, with respect to less pretending cases, with which, perhaps, I was not so much interested, Dr. Elliotson would say—"This is genuine—this may be relied on!"

And is *this* the man (thought I) who is branded as credulously believing everything?

But Wisdom is justified of all her children.

Every genuine philosopher knows that there is a true and a false—nay, that the counterfeit implies an original, just as a pseudo-Raphael looks as if there were a genuine picture of the kind: or in the same manner as the many false religions of the world are arguments for the existence of a true one.

Long have the Mesmerists been aware of the "illusions" and "collusions" on which the cuckoo changes have been rung. But it is the puzzling residuum that, after all deductions, Coleridge acknowledged, with which the true Mesmerist is occupied.

It is not for the Reviewer to teach us, but for us to teach the Reviewer, how much of Suggestion or Imagination clings to Mesmerism. Fully are we aware, that many, though not *all*, of the phenomena developed by artificial means occur sometimes naturally and spontaneously.

I could tell the Reviewer many more astounding stories to this effect than he has brought forward; only they would prove too much for his purpose. They would, perchance, demonstrate the fearful bugbear of clairvoyance.

Many others, as well as myself, heard the late Mr. Bulteel give an account of the extraordinary state of a young lady—a relative of his—who, on being too suddenly told of the death of her father, fell into a sort of somnambulistic sensitiveness. In this condition, not only were the normal avenues of sense rendered so acute that she could by the smell hunt out a ball when the children had lost it in the grass, but there was also a development of a faculty akin to Visual perception in the nerves of the extremities; a phenomenon which Mr. Bulteel tested. Having received a letter from Lady Elizabeth, he glided it under the sofa cushion on which the sensitive was sitting. She inserted her hand also under the cushion, and, with her palm prest upon the letter, read accurately the greater part of it from the touch alone.

Again, the head physician of the hospital at Ant-

werp, who had been much opposed to Mesmerism, and who had laughed with the world at the idea of Clairvoyance, had the honesty afterwards to give in his adhesion, to the latter phenomenon at least, on the following occasion. He told me himself that a young lady, whom he had known from childhood, fell, spontaneously, after some strong emotion, into a species of intermittent somnambulism, accompanied by extraordinary development of faculties. The physician, a man of the exactest science, a great friend of Arago, tested the transposition (as it is *called*) of senses in the most rigid manner; and he assured me that he had convinced himself, not once, but a hundred times, that there was vision by the epigastrium. Writing, glided in, face downwards, by himself, under the bed-clothes, and held down on the pit of the stomach, was read without difficulty. Besides this, the patient would frequently announce the arrival of unexpected visitors, and describe their attire and the objects which they held in their hands, when they were yet only approaching the house, and even, perhaps, a mile away from it. These marvels, which many courteous people denominated, and *will* denominate, lies, were courageously related by the Physician to those who questioned him on the subject of his conversion. He said to me, "Arago has written to beg I will, for my own sake, be silent about these things. He fears people will think me mad. But I know what I have seen, and am not ashamed to relate it."

Such anecdotes as these (and thousands of a similar kind are known to Mesmerists) have long taught the careful mesmeric enquirer that Nature herself evokes many of the marvels which he induces. He

knows as well as, and much better than, the Reviewer can tell him, that the pure Mesmeric influence is hard to eliminate from amongst the conflicting elements which environ it; that a pure and genuine experiment in Mesmerism is rare like a true friend or a candid anti-mesmerist. He knows that there are sham somnambulists; he knows, moreover, that even true somnambulists are often in that state of transparent artifice which, perhaps, most proves them to be genuine. A childish cunning, if it belong to the character, is often rendered *more* apparent under Mesmerism. He knows that which the Reviewer has, this time, truly observed, namely, that the slightest hint is sufficient to induce a phenomenon when the patient is in a state of watchful sensibility. Nay more, he is well aware that, when once the mesmeric sleep-waking has been adduced *ab extrà*, it may occur, occasionally, by a species of self-mesmerisation.

If asked—"Is there Suggestion in Mesmerism?"—he would answer—"Of course there is! How should there not be? It is the law of being. Where mind is, there is Suggestion also."

But, carefully, like the chemist, he precipitates his elements, and finds, by some slight index, that he is obliged to add a new one to the list. For what, then, are we indebted to the Reviewer? "I thank you for nothing," as they say at school. Throughout the whole of this matter, it is not we who are to be charged with negligent examination or ignorance of our subject, but it is our adversaries who err towards us by ignoring the amount of our knowledge and what we are really doing.

There is one assertion which the Reviewer has

made concerning us which is so glaringly erroneous that it must be here remarked upon. He accused the Mesmerists of having *invented* the phenomenon called "*Rapport*." He declares that it only exists "because the Somnambule is previously possessed with the idea" of it.

Doubtless, he wishes, as George the Third did with respect to the Athanasian creed, that he were "well rid of it." Being one of the great features of Mesmerism which result from Duality, and prove an agent, it is certainly an awkward hitch in the Reviewer's machinery—a screw, tight enough for us, but manifestly not loose enough for him.

And how would he obliterate the alarming phenomenon? Easily! By one of his own ever-ready assertions. He declares, that "the *rapport* was not discovered until long after the practice of the art had come into vogue, having been unknown to Mesmer and his immediate disciples."

Now Deleuze, a contemporary, if not immediate disciple, of Mesmer, (and Mesmer did not die till 1815,) *discovered* at a very early stage of Mesmeric observation the existence of that peculiar Sympathy and attraction which the subject has to the Mesmeriser, and which is technically called "*Rapport*." Any one may read in the works of Deleuze how much he says about this singular feature of the Mesmeric state, which, so far from being suggested by him to his patients, seems to have startled him at first as something disagreeable. This does not look like an inventing of the phenomenon by Deleuze, nor does anything in its subsequent history justify respecting it the following assertion of the Reviewer: "Its phenomena have only acquired con-

stancy and fixity in proportion as its laws have been announced and received." Part of the statement may be true, but from it we may draw an inference the very reverse to the Reviewer's. How can laws be "announced and received" unless they have been perceived and studied? The gradual growth of belief as to a matter of observation surely seems to shew a gradual growth of knowledge. And certainly it is more in accordance with known principles to suppose that men observe, decide, and promulgate, than to assert that men invent, announce, and originate phenomena themselves. Again, the Reviewer rather proves against himself when he goes on to say that several Mesmerisers have not been able, for some time, to detect the "Rapport," but "have obtained immediate evidence of it when once the idea had been put into their own minds and thence *transferred into those of their subjects.*"

The words marked by me in italics are, as regards the interests of the Reviewer, perilous, and fraught with dangerous matter. We ask directly, *how?*—how is the idea transferred from one *mind* to another? Not always verbally I am sure. When I Mesmerised, many proofs presented themselves to me that "Rapport" existed without any thought of it on my part, or any previous knowledge of it on the part of my patient. I remember a remarkable instance when I Mesmerised a very talented man, Mr. Arthur Clough, author of some clever poems,* He assured me, previously to the Mesmerising, that he knew nothing about Mesmerism, but was willing to try what it felt like.

* *Ambarvalia*, and *the Bothie of Topernafuosick*, published by Chapman and Hall, Piccadilly.

I had succeeded in inducing the sleep, when, so little was I thinking about "Rapport," I left my patient comfortably installed in an arm chair, and went into an adjoining room. Suddenly, I heard a great kicking, and, going back, I found Mr. Clough in a most excited state, throwing himself about, seizing whatever was next him, and hurling cushions, &c., about the room. I found that the only means to calm him was to remain near him, and to make passes over him. When recovered, he said, "You must not go away from me. When you did just now, it made me feel very ill."*

As the reverse of the medal, I can say that I have also met with patients whom no Suggestion could persuade into "Rapport."

Though Mesmerised they went about the room freely, conversed with anybody; and, when asked if they felt uneasy on my leaving them, invariably answered, "Not at all!"

From these facts, I deduce that the phenomenon of "Rapport" depends on the temperament of the Mesmeriser and Mesmerisee. Some Mesmerisers are thought to produce it more than others. It has frequently occurred in my patients. Dr. Elliotson believes it depends altogether upon the Mesmerisee.†

* One of the strongest instances of "Rapport" I ever met with was in a German boy, not seven years old, the son of a medical man, who authorized and was present at the experiment. So ignorant was the child of Mesmerism, that, when his father ordered him to sit down to be Mesmerised, he (mistaking the word *magnetisiren* for *rasiren)* asked, "but where is the *razor*?" Yet this little boy, with bandaged eyes, did in the Mesmeric state draw the same lines that I drew, and, though ignorant of music, played the same notes that I played, besides manifesting various other phenomena of Sympathy.

† Dr. Elliotson has witnessed it in many of his patients who had never heard of such a thing.

There is therefore nothing wonderful in Mesmer's comparative silence with regard to *Rapport*, or in Deleuze's discovery. The two men were different enough to account for a difference in the phenomena which they elicited from their patients.

The folly is in supposing Mesmerism anything from the beginning but a science of observation—in imagining that the students of it have not followed Nature, but have preceded her. Mesmer first discovered, or (as one rather ought to say with regard to all discoveries) *perceived* the fact that one human being, peculiarly and physically, affects another, by remarking, when he was in the room with a sick person losing blood, that the flow of blood from the vein was accelerated or retarded in the exact proportion that he approached to or receded from the patient.

Since the time of that first great discovery, every step made in the science of Mesmerism has been through the Baconian method of induction. We have observed: we have recorded our observations. This is all.

As one experienced in Mesmerism, I assert that it is the Subject who teaches the Mesmeriser, not the Mesmeriser who Suggests to the Subject. Sometimes indeed the latter astonishes him by new and unexpected phenomena, which lie wholly beyond his control. With regard to this very matter of *Rapport*, I can relate some singular caprices in Somnambulists, the development of which was spontaneous.

Once I was trying the experiment of Mesmerising what is called "the chain—meaning a row of persons, who sit holding each other's hands, while the Mesmeriser performs passes before them all. Four persons, in this case, formed the chain. The two in

the middle were ladies who knew a good deal about Mesmerism; the two at the ends were a young lady and gentleman, who were altogether ignorant of Mesmerism. Yet these two were precisely the persons who were affected by the passes. In a short time, while the others remained unimpressed, they seemed to pass into profound coma. Soon a curious circumstance was observable. One of them began to stir as if passing into the sleep-waking state: immediately the other performed the same gesture. This occurred several times with reciprocal exactness. If the young man rubbed his brow, the lady (a cousin of mine) rubbed hers also. If the lady leant her head back, the young man leant his head back. This curious state of things I silently pointed out to the attention of the two wide-awake ladies, to whom I also signed that they should remain as they were; and then, standing so as to hide my doings from one of those who had passed into mutual *Rapport*, I performed a series of most interesting experiments—the more interesting from being wholly unexpected. I found I could by only acting on one, influence the two simultaneously, just as if I held the wires of two puppets. If I attracted the arm, or leg, or head of the one, the corresponding arm, or leg, and the head of the other performed precisely the same motion. Nay, I could make their mouths open and shut at the same moment. See each other they could not, for they were both leaning back in their chairs, so that the two middle persons blocked them out from the view of each other. At length, the ladies who had remained awake got tired of their position and broke the chain, when instantly the simultaneous phenomena ceased.

More recently, at an experiment of Table-turning, two ladies sitting at two separate tables, who were only intent on moving the table, and not thinking (as they afterwards assured me) of Mesmerism at all, fell suddenly into a state of Coma, from which no other person could awake them, in either case, than the two gentlemen who had sat opposite to them. Thus did it appear manifest that a *Rapport* had been unconsciously established between them and their *cavaliers en vis-à-vis*. Such cases as these incontestably prove the phenomenon called *Rapport*. It is sometimes even inconveniently manifested. I cannot help that: it occurs.

But an important point is, that *Rapport* is not the sole principle in Mesmerism. It may be, and should be, modified by another; which is, the subject's obedience to the Mesmeriser's will. *Rapport* itself may balance and hold in check the over-excessive development of *Rapport*. To be sure, the mysterious Sympathy that makes a subject seem to depend on the Mesmeriser almost for existence is flattering to the pride of the latter; and therefore (especially in the first zeal of Mesmeric experimentalizing) the operator is tempted to draw out his Somnambulist into displays which testify his power.

But Mesmerisers are beginning to see that "Rapport" should be kept under due regulations. It must not serve as a drawing-room amusement, but be considered, like the whole of Mesmerism, as a sacred means only to be used to some worthy end. Even to use it for mere proof of the existence of a medium is perhaps to tamper with it too much. Its legitimate use is that to which it was put by Mr. Bayley at Vevey; namely, that of succouring humanity

where all other means fail. I allude to his having saved the life of a young lady, who was dying from starvation consequent on incapacity to swallow food, by taking advantage of that feature of "Rapport" which demonstrates Sympathy of muscular movement. Mr. Bayley held the young lady's hand, swallowed food himself, and, so by judiciously exciting simultaneous actions in his patient, enabled her to take nourishment for the first time since many days.* The Hon. Miss C. C. Boyle suggested this.

Count Szapary, *per contrà*,—that real *nobleman* of Hungary, who has applied his large fortune to founding Mesmeric Institutions in various towns of Europe for the benefit of sick people, has shewn that *Rapport* need not in general interfere with a medical Mesmeriser's time or convenience. Often, as he tells me, he leaves his patients to sleep out their beneficial Coma by themselves. The same thing may also be seen in the Mesmeric Infirmary in London. Every inconvenient development of *Rapport* is discouraged.

The sum, then, of the observations made by Mesmerists on the subject of *Rapport* is, that the phenomenon occurs, independently of Suggestion, or of the Mesmeriser's will; but may, by Suggestion in conjunction with the Mesmeriser's will, be considerably modified and kept under due regulation.

This true state of the case, as to *Rapport*, will not, I fear, suit the views of any of the opponents of Mesmerism. For one party I prove too much; for another, too little The Suggestion-mongers want to refer "Rapport" entirely to the principle (?) of do-

* See this striking case in *The Zoist*, No. XXIX.

minant ideas:" the Alarmists, on the other hand, desire to see in Mesmeric Sympathy something *awful* (oh, that cant word !) and highly improper.

Having now demonstrated how little our adversaries are qualified to teach *us*, I have to shew that they refuse to let us *teach* them. Condemning us as bad experimenters, they do not pay proper regard to our experiments, whether those experiments be related to them, as having been honestly and carefully performed by us, or be actually done in their own presence.

But, ere I fully enter upon this important part of my subject, it is necessary, for the sake of clearness, that I should advert to the culminating point towards which these experiments of ours invariably tend.

The Reviewer knows as well as I do (though he "huddles up in fogs the dangerous" topic) that the true point at issue is the influence of one human being on another: which, for brevity's sake, I will denominate the human influence.

After the Reviewer's go-astray haranguings, there needs the following definition to set him right. A Mesmerist is a person who believes in the human agency: an Anti-Mesmerist, is a person who denies the human agency.

Had the Reviewer set this down clearly from the beginning of his Article, the affair would have been greatly simplified; but, unfortunate in classification as in theory, he has erred in confounding the nature of human belief in general, with the state of human

belief with regard to one subject in particular. Hence he talks of an "ascending series" of beings, "the base of which is composed of those utter sceptics who discredit the genuineness of all the asserted phenomena:" "whilst it culminates in that assemblage of thorough-going believers, who find nothing too hard for *spiritual agency*." *This classification is not founded* in fact, as regards the subject we are treating, but is only a loose and barren generality. That there are various shades of the principle of belief in various individuals may be true, but, with respect to Mesmerism, there are but two states of mind, namely, one of affirmation—one of negation. The "ascending series," does not therefore fit the case.

The "*poco piu*," or the "*poco méno*" of Credulity or Scepticism, belongs to the man, as man, not as Mesmerist or Anti-Mesmerist. Just as the case stands between Christians and Infidels, so it is in the present instance. There are many sober-minded Christians, and many very credulous Infidels. So are there many sober-minded Mesmerists, "who desire to bring everything to the test of common sense:" and there are, also, many credulous Anti-Mesmerists, who strain at gnats, but are ready to swallow the very largest camel.

This premised, I proceed to state what it is the Anti-Mesmerists require of us—what proof of our mission—what sign from heaven—ere they will put any faith in us at all.

On this point, the Reviewer is clearer than usual. He calls upon us to demonstrate what he calls "the fundamental article in the Mesmeric creed," but which, really, is only, on our part, a piece of legitimate induction, forced upon us by circumstances:

namely, the "question," (the Reviewer should have said, *existence*) "of some magnetic (?) or other dynamical force. This he calls upon us to demonstrate by shewing, that "either the somnambulistic state, or some other characteristic phenomenon, could be induced" (Reviewer's Italics) *without the consciousness on the part of the subject that any agency was being exerted.*"

Again, I have to clear up confusion before I go further.

Defining Mesmerism to be the Influence of man on man, the Exertion of power by one human being over another, which the Reviewer (begging the question) denies in *limine,* we must perceive that the Reviewer, in his touchstone of Mesmerism, has involved too very different things, namely, a fact, and the agency which produces that fact. That the man in the room is the visible antecedent to any Biologic or Mesmeric phenomena, I have shewn; but the *quomodo* of the thing is altogether a different question. The fact, and the Theory that generalizes all our facts, stand in the same relation to each other as the fall of the apple to Newton's gravitation. We do not invent our fact, but we infer from it an ulterior fact. Yet, we keep the fact and the Theory so far apart, that, for any man to deny the Theory, by no means involves a denial of the fact.

Now, in our opinion, the human influence, often and undeniably exercised," *without the consciousness, on the part of the subject, that any agency was being exerted,*" is as much a fact as any other fact in life: for instance, that fire burns, or that water drowns.

We do not bring forward the human influence, unallied to Suggestion, as a Theory, but as a fact—

un fait accompli, as the French say. This, and *not* any disputable agency, is the fundamental article;" *not indeed of our creed, but of our conviction. This is the broad rock on which we build. To it we may, like Cowper's* orthodox man, superadd a few essentials more;" but the veriest tyro in Mesmeric practice, even if he does not reason about it, admits it; for it lies before his senses as a self-evident thing.

Why, then, is it so hard to convince the opposite party of this fact?

Because they *are* a party, whereas, we are champions, not partisans, of Mesmerism. We study nature—they seek to refute nature. Thus there is no common ground between us.

We have not, in trying to move the minds of our opponents, that "*point d'appui*—that other world whereon to rest the lever, of which Archimedes used to talk. That certain amount of confidence to begin with, which is conceded to experimentalists on every other subject, is denied to us here. *We are not believed.* In this lies the head and front of our offending.

This, for example, is the Reviewer's canon on the subject, neatly, but fallaciously framed, as if on purpose to block out from Mesmerists, and Anti-Mesmerists, all hopes of an accommodation.

He advises all men (oyer! oyer!) "*to receive none of these statements*" (such, namely, as disagree with the Reviewer's opinions) "*upon the unsupported testimony of believers.*" (Reviewer's italics.)

Yet, what other testimony would the man have? What other testimony *could* he have.

Decidedly, he is from potatoe-land!

Would he have the testimony of *un*believers? A

curious testimony that would be—Something of that kind of witness which the Jews would bear to the truth of the Gospel!

Our opponents, forsooth, want, in dealing with us, to be Judge and Jury both. Yet Wordsworth, not a lawyer, was called to decide on a legal literary question, and to pronounce, by internal evidence of style, whether certain letters attributed to an author were genuine or not. He was heard on his own subject as a competent witness.

And have we not competent witnesses to the purity of our facts?

Bear witness of the names of Archbishop Whately, of Dr. Elliotson, of a Sandby, a Gregory, an Esdaile, a Monckton Milnes. Surely these are sufficient to counterpoise the credit due to Doctors Holland, Carpenter, &c.; and, with such men as the above to conduct our experiments, we must consider the Reviewer's assertion, that we want "observers qualified for the task by habits of philosophic discrimination," to be as weak and inconclusive as his other statements respecting us. At least, Whately knows logic, and the Reviewer might read his admirable book on that subject to advantage. Every one of the Ante-Mesmerists may be considered as adherents to old exploded systems. They are "deceitful on the weights. They are altogether lighter than vanity itself." Their peculiar methods with us shew the weakness of their cause. The whole, with them, is gratuitous assumption and reasoning in a vicious circle. Their mouthpiece first takes for granted the incompetence of Mesmeric observers, then does away with the law which sets *any* observer of any sequence of facts above any non-observer of such facts, and then de-

clines to receive the testimony of experimental believers, *because* he has pronounced them incompetent observers.

Of what worth is such a fiat? Yet, of what worth would be the good opinion of such a reasoner? There are some writers whose blame is praise. But, as if the assertion of one incompetence were not enough to floor us, the Reviewer tries to plant an additional knock-me-down hit. Thus says he:—

"There are many cases of asserted Clairvoyance, to which, *if all that is stated of them be true,* (my italics) none of these causes of fallacy apply." So, then, we lie, do we? Alas, how little does the Reviewer know of the strictness with itself of an honest mind!

We *dare not* deceive ourselves. We *dare not* lie. "C'est facile d'employer de pareils moyens; c'est difficile de s'y resoudre."

A Mesmeriser is not the dishonest thing which the Reviewer supposes. He is a human being, ready to be more severe with himself than anybody can be over him. He has had a work to do, compared with which, to convince the world, or even a Reviewer, is very nearly a worthless task. He has had to convince himself!

And think you he will do this lightly?

Nay, but the human breast is severe in its requisitions. Though, sometimes, "what we wish to believe, Hope conceives may be true;" yet, in the long run, what the heart wishes to believe, it guards against. To live, and be a lie to oneself, who could bear it? Fear not, then, reader, to trust the Mesmerist! For his own sake he will be—not, perhaps, a "*philosophical* investigator," but an honest one.

He will not say (to use Carlyle's forcible thought on Religion) "Yes and no"—but "Yes *or* no." And, in what does greater honesty consist? In believing the evidence of hourly experience, or, in denying to experimentalists the common trust reposed under the same circumstances in every human being?

Had those "thorough-going believers," of whom the Reviewer manifests such a horror, (and no wonder, for they are too thorough-going for him,) been dealt with fairly, the world would not have now to enquire into the question of human influence exercised without the subject being pre-warned or suggestified.

Very recently I witnessed a most conclusive experiment, under this head, at the house of Mr. L——, a gentleman residing at Geneva, who, having been cured by Mesmerism of a paralytic affection, is naturally interested in the subject.

The Mesmeriser was a master carpenter of Geneva —one of a class which, often more intelligent than what is called the superior, is not unfrequently led to the study of new phenomena. The subject was a young dressmaker, whom Mr. D——, the carpenter, mesmerised for her health, which was rapidly improving under the influence. The young woman was soon thrown into sleep-waking, and the experiment regarding unsuggested influence was as follows:—

The patient, who did not mind the operator leaving her, and who conversed freely with everybody in the room, was left with part of Mr. L.'s family in the dining-room, while the Mesmeriser, with Mr. L——, myself, and others, went into the drawing-room, which was divided from the dining-room by folding-doors. These doors were shut—indeed, closely shut. Then, one of the party present with the Mesmeriser

(myself) in the first place gave a silent signal, in the midst of our talking, which we did not interrupt: and instantly the Mesmeriser, as agreed, made a quiet pass of a beckoning nature towards the drawing-room. Instantly we heard the somnambulist rush at the folding-doors, which she forced open so suddenly, in the beginning of our experiment, that we feared she might hurt herself; and (different persons present repeating the experiment several times) left them, afterwards, (though still closed,) not so firmly fastened as before. The party in the other room, who had tried to engage the girl in conversation, and even to hold her back, declared that her sudden and instantaneous rush to the door, that *we* knew, but *they* did not, to be simultaneous with the Mesmeriser's pass, was something extraordinary and almost fearful.

Such experiments as these have not been performed merely in private, but before the world. A millionth part of the evidence accumulated for Mesmerism would have sufficed to settle any other question.

For months, Dr. Elliotson was shewing to the world a series of experiments with the Okeys, most rigidly conducted.

I once had the pleasure of talking with Mrs. Somerville about those very experiments, and I asked her what she saw. "Why," she replied, "I saw Dr. Elliotson standing on one side of a screen, and the Okeys on the other, where certainly they could not possibly see him; and, whatever the Doctor did, they did. If he moved his left arm, they moved their left arms; if he made a face, they made the same face, &c." "Well," I asked, "did not all this strike you as very extraordinary?" "Why, no," re-

sponded the lady. "I own I did not trouble myself to think much about it, as I concluded it was a sort of trick."

So it is ever with us and our opponents. Shew them the most accurate experiments, they have two things to fall back upon—fraud or folly. There is either collusion or deplorable weakness.

I may also add that I have had the two Okeys at my house for hours together—young women, whose sincerity, in spite of the trumped-up stories of their having confessed to imposition, &c., I never had the slightest reason to doubt; and I have fixed Elizabeth Okey, by the most slight and distant passes behind her back, when she was talking or laughing or going to fetch anything, into the most statue-like rigidity, and into attitudes which, so arrested, had all the grace of a statue as well as the beauty of life. At the time, also, when Dr. Elliotson was shewing his most interesting experiments with these girls to half London, anybody was allowed, by trial, to convince himself of the effect upon them of sudden passes from a distance and behind their backs.

Again, I was present at a mesmeric *séance* which took place at Lord L.'s house in St. James's Square, and in the course of which the strictest proofs of influence without suggestion were afforded to a scientific party, amongst whom was Dr. Arnott, and (I think) Mr. Babbage.

The subject was a maid of Lady L—— (neither Lord nor Lady L—— was present during the *séance*.) After the girl had entered into sleep-waking, the Mesmeriser, who was himself chosen by the committee of enquirers, stood behind her chair, which was studiously placed where there was no mirror

opposite, or any means whereby the subject could be made aware of the Mesmeriser's motions. The different doubters then handed silently to the Mesmeriser slips of paper, on which each had written, according to his fancy, what the Mesmeriser was to do. If it was written, "Raise your right arm!" he raised it up—if, "Nod your head," he nodded it—if, "Lift up your left leg," he lifted up his left leg; and, in no one single instance did the mesmerised girl fail to perform the same motion. But, as usual, what seemed too extraordinary to be believed was scarcely believed. "Curious coincidence," it appeared, was to do duty for the day. At last, some one wrote, "Put out your tongue;" and this was done on the part of the Mesmeriser, and so rapidly repeated by the patient, that all doubt seemed in a moment to be thawed out of the whole assembly, and a chorus of assent, and of applause, ran round the room.

Another open demonstration, which took place about the same time as the foregoing in London, was at the apartments of Mr. Monckton Milnes in Pall Mall. Mr. Stafford O'Brien, and many others amongst whom I was one, were present to witness the singular susceptibility of Mr. Christie,* who at the slightest Mesmeric pass directed with intention towards himself, whether seen or unseen by him, fell into spasmodic convulsions of the most violent kind, during which, however, he never lost his consciousness. At the commencement of the experiments his eyes were so firmly closed through the action of the passes that he declared he could not open them,—then succeeded extraordinary contor-

* Late M.P. for Weymouth.

tions of the face, and, as the subject was more worked upon, his whole body became convulsed. Of course, the great point for which we were convened was to prove "Influence without Suggestion." Accordingly, the operator was placed behind Mr. Christie, and at a considerable distance from him. Anybody could produce the effect. The experiment that seemed to strike every one the most was the following, in which I was the operator. Mr. Christie was placed with his back to the whole company, farther off from us than the middle of Mr. Monckton Milnes's large sitting-room—an apartment, I should guess, about thirty feet in length. I was placed, at the desire of the others, with my back to Mr. Christie, and close to the fire-place, which was at one end of the room. The experiment had a double end in view: namely, not only to ascertain "Influence without Suggestion," but also how far the Influence was capable of reflection from mirrors. I was therefore requested to direct, at a particular signal, the single pass, which had been before found sufficient to produce the desired effect, towards the figure of Mr. Christie reflected in a large looking-glass over the chimney-piece. I must observe that there was no mirror opposite or elsewhere in the room. Close to me was the deputy of the company, who was to give the signal for me to wave my hand. Every expedient was resorted to that might prevent any motion of mine from being a signal to my patient, even by the slight possible sound that the raising of my arm might make; and things were done to mystify Mr. Christie and to make me uncertain when the true signal might come. It was delayed for some little time, and no

effect whatever was manifested. Mr. Christie stood always in the same position with his head parallel to the side walls and slightly bent down. Then the silent signal—the mere waving of a hand—was given. I responded directly by one single slight and noiseless pass directed towards the glass, when instantly Mr. C. fell, as if shot, to the floor, and had an access of most violent convulsive movements, which lasted a considerable time. He was lifted up by two or three of the company and carried to the sofa, where the spasmodic action still continued till it seemed to wear itself out.

Another person who was remarkably susceptible to the Influence conveyed by passes was Mr. Bush.* In him, as if to baffle the suggestion-mongers, was this peculiarity. He was not affected by passes made in front of him for however long a time, but by passes made behind his back (often without his knowledge), and directed towards the neck, where the spinal marrow abuts upon the brain. Many persons will recollect that it was quite an amusement with those who loved to experimentalize, to put Mr. Bush to sleep without his knowledge or consent. So far from his being proud of this faculty of sensitiveness, I believe he was annoyed at it, and would, if he could, have suggested to himself utter resistance to those sly yet amicable tormentors who passed the drowsy spell upon him.

Such openly demonstrated experiments ought to stand as so much ground gained to the Mesmerist. No such thing. All common rules are to be reversed in our case. What is once proved in other matters

* Late *attaché* to the British Legation at Frankfort.

stands as a perpetual heir-loom to science. Not so as regards Mesmerism. We may convince men nine hundred and ninety-nine times, but the thousandth time we are called upon to do the work all over again. What never was asked of any experimentalists before is demanded at our hands. We are called upon to live in a constant state of proof. This is all the harder because the prejudice, the impatience, the wrong conceptions, the unreasonable demands, of our adversaries really do render our task peculiarly difficult. Ready as we are to give satisfaction, they, like a certain difficult mistress of old,

> "Won't be contented,
> Do whate'er we will."

These faults of our foes, and the peculiar ideas expressly reserved for the benefit of Mesmerism, are a much truer reason for our failures than that one which the Reviewer says we make so much of, namely,—the hindering effect of sceptical presence at a mesmeric meeting. There is something in this, but not everything. Doubtless, by our own theory, we suppose that a hostile presence may of itself disturb the production of phenomena. We say, "Man acts on man: brain acts on brain. And there is a medium between man and man, brain and brain, which silently does its work of influence or impression." It would not be wonderful, then, if the Mesmerisee, whose sensibility is allowed to be exalted, should exclaim with Shakespeare,

> "By the pricking of my thumbs,
> Something wicked this way comes."

But there is no need to say so much. By the Reviewer's own shewing, Mesmeric patients "shew

a marvellous amount of acuteness" in taking a hint, or "in following the lead." The faintest whisper is enough to put them on a scent. What wonder, then, if they sometimes scent a foe? The most "candid" of the sceptical in Mesmerism are apt to betray their candour more than they suppose. Courteous they perhaps would be, but they forget themselves; and, if for the first five minutes they "*behave themselves,*" they soon fidget into scorn, contempt, and undoubting doubt, not conveyed in any whisper less audible than a stage-aside. But, what folly it is to talk of not conveying one's sentiments even to the rudest human perceptions! A chance visiter cannot enter a room without the host seeing with half an eye whether he is come with true friendliness or not. Perhaps the more polite the guest, the less satisfied is the host. A sham civility imposes on nobody. "Yea, to spy out the nakedness of the land are we come"—is written on many a smiling brow. Then how quickly children know that not every one who says, "I love children," loves them anywhere but in their places—that is, out of the room. Even a dog knows who loves dogs. Defend me, say I, from the Mrs. Candour sort of people! Reading them off at a glance, the Mesmeriser (to say nothing of the Mesmerisee) gets into a fidget, becomes more and more irritated, and at length incapable of conducting the experiments properly.

But this irritation—this awkwardness—are no more than happen in every-day life under the impression that a sneering observer's eye is upon one. Public professors, more especially, who have to perform any experiment before a crowd, get nervous and fidgetty, if an idea is slid into their minds that

their audience is very critical; and this disturbance goes on in an encreasing ratio. The notion that they shall not succeed causes failure. How often have I seen a chemical lecturer get into a bungle over his pots and pans! This then is not peculiar to the Mesmeriser. Even on the Reviewer's shewing, over-attention mars faculty.

To this cause of mesmeric failure, let me add one or two more. And first, the impatience of our adversaries with regard to Mesmerism. There seems to be a singular notion afloat, that, because an experiment has failed once, it will never succeed. Perhaps, however, this feeling is human. I remember that, long ago, the late Lord N——, a nobleman of remarkable intelligence, told me that if any one should rub a piece of paper for some time with Indian rubber, then place the paper on a piece of wood in a dusky place, and, immediately after that, present the knuckle to the paper—a spark would be seen issuing from the latter. I tried this at least twenty times, never saw the spark, and at last was fairly tempted to conclude there was no such thing. And so perhaps I should have thought to this day, had I not gone on to the one and twentieth time, when I saw the spark, and received a valuable lesson with regard to such rash conclusions as are deduced from repeated failure.

Another time, I went to see the pretty experiment of polarizing the light; but the light was sulky that day, and did not choose to be polarized. However, I did not go away from the lecture-room, saying, "Light *never is* polarized." How must every Cambridge man of a certain (or uncertain) standing remember divers lectures of the excellent Professor

F——, in which things never *would* succeed. But we always took his word for them.

Another immense hindrance to the reception of Mesmerism are the wrong notions respecting it, and the consequent demands made upon its capabilities.

Men have heard of Clairvoyance, and Clairvoyance they wish to see. As they suppose that they may command the higher, they will not rest satisfied with the lower, phenomena; and, besides this, they somehow identify Clairvoyance with Mesmerism. Shades of gradation are seldom understood by the mass. To use an American expression, the want of elegance in which is compensated by its force, men like to "go the whole hog." And this vagueness of idea about Mesmerism, this want of classification of the phenomena, is an additional obstacle to its being received by the multitude.

Mesmerism, mixed and muddled up in unfortunate brains with true and false, is condemned in the lump. To most persons is it not a heterogeneous scarecrow, "a thing of shreds and patches," made up of Clairvoyance, Biology, Hypnotism, quackery, knavery, and folly *quantum suff.?* The case resembles that hard one of "the Lake poets," who used rightly to say that their designation was only true inasmuch as they all lived at the Lakes; for that, in fact, no set of men could differ more amongst themselves than that composed of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, and Lloyd. So Mesmerism is only identified with Clairvoyance because the two phenomena are sometimes found in each other's company. But I throw in this appeal. Mesmerism is not to be judged by its derivatives, whether they be illegitimate children or even honourable offspring. By

itself must it stand or fall. Then, as regards Clairvoyance, we have to make definitions and distinctions. There are a heap of *dis*similar phenomena which go under the name of Clairvoyance. The Mesmerisee, who reads, or gives other proofs of vision (or more properly, perception), through undoubted obstacles, or in any abnormal way, is called a "Clairvoyant." So is the Mesmeric Sleep-waker who gives an account of things happening at a distance, or who is supposed to tell the past and predict the future. So is the patient, who is exalted into the state (true or false) called "Extase," to whose elevated eye Heaven itself, and Beings, whom one can scarcely name in such a case without impiety, are visible. Yet, manifestly, these are all very different cases. For a subject even to pretend to the first is extremely rare, to the second still more so, to the third (happily) rarest of all. And, besides this, each of these phenomena (if true) involves a different question. Vision of distant objects is quite another thing to vision of present objects, or even to knowledge of distantly passing events: and visions of Heaven are also *sui generis*—yet all are called Clairvoyance, and most persons include all these things in their idea of Mesmerism. To come up to such a *beau ideal* is not an easy task for poor Mesmerism. Here, then, are more impediments to general conviction. The belief of most persons in anything depends on their opportunities of evidence—and the opportunities of evidence, as regards the higher phenomena of Mesmerism, are rare.*

* Yet how unphilosophical it would be to conclude (as the Reviewer does) from rarity of evidence that there is no evidence at all for these higher phenomena!

But, when we add to all these causes of failure, the temper in which our opponents come to witness our experiments, we may exclaim with one of Molière's heroes, "Ciel, comme l'affaire est compliquée!"

What the Reviewer accuses *us* of, viz., "going into the enquiry with a foregone conclusion," miraculously applies to our opponents.

How many candid sceptics go and see mesmeric phenomena—not to *ascertain*, but to *confute!* What is the use of their examining a cause about which their mind is made up,—of pretending to judge where they have already condemned? Does Nature reveal herself to such? And, all the time, our adversaries profess much mealy-mouthed fairness.

One occasion, especially, I cannot but recall on which this equitable temper was manifested to a very extraordinary degree.

A clever, well-known divine, whom I will call Dr. W——, came, at his own request, to a *séance*, at which I was to mesmerise a patient remarkable for his power of reading and seeing objects by abnormal vision. Before the mesmerisation, nothing could be fairer than Dr. W——. I expounded to him somewhat of my theory, and he seemed pleased at the notion that some of the phenomena which he was about to see would bear on the subject of a vibratory ether; for, with regard to the theory of vibrations, Dr. W—— was not only a very strong believer, but a powerful advocate in print. However, the result proved that he would believe in nobody's vibrations but his own. Dr. W—— continued in the candid mood until the critical moment, when the phenomena were before him. Then I, having mesmerised my patient, begged him to place his fingers himself

on the patient's eyes to ascertain that they were shut, (Dr. W—— thought this the most satisfactory test,) at the same time warning him that the eyeballs would move beneath his finger, as they always do in Mesmeric patients, but authorizing him to use any degree of pressure short of injurious violence. He held his fingers pressed tightly down on the patient's eyes, who then named every object held before him. Surely if Dr. W—— did not hold down the eyelids to his satisfaction, it was his own fault, and he had nobody to blame but himself.* Thus he let the experiments go on for two or three minutes, and then, in a highly excited manner, and trembling from vehemence, called out, "His eyes are *not* shut! It is all a trick and pretence!"

Some persons present seemed annoyed at the manner of Dr. W——, and proposed bandaging the patient's eyes with a black silk handkerchief, and then stuffing with cotton, declaring that they should be satisfied if, in that state, the patient named objects held directly before the bandage. To gratify them, I allowed the eyes to be so bandaged. But, in the meantime, Dr. W—— had gone off from observing the phenomena at all, and had seated himself on a chair in a distant part of the room, where he turned performer himself. He got himself also bandaged, without cotton, and very loosely, and he was writhing about in order to get the bandage displaced and to have a peep at a card which some one held before him. Such is the influence of name, that nearly all the persons in the room deserted the Somnambulist

* The young man's eyes *were* so hurt by the extreme violence which Dr. W—— had used in pressing the balls back into his head, that he suffered pain in them for some hours after he awoke.

and me, to look at the mountebank tricks of the Doctor. However, a few patient investigators of truth remained near the Mesmerisee, and were amply rewarded by seeing some beautiful phenomena growing out of the very conduct that was meant to crush us. Though the Sleep-waker sat with closely-bandaged and wadded eyes and his back to the grimacing part of the company, he described everything they were doing with the most comic humour; and he asked, "What in the world is that gentleman in the chair making such faces for, and what is he giving himself such trouble about? Tell him from me that the card he is trying to see is so and so"—at the same time naming the card correctly. Some of the persons composing our small group called out what had been done; but the Doctorites, absorbed in admiration of their chief's sagacity, took no heed; and, though I am not aware that the Doctor ever succeeded in seeing anything, yet, when he rose from his chair, and announced that he "had discovered the whole imposition—that the pretended Somnambulist only did a clever trick by *sleight of eye*, which was equivalent to a conjuror's *sleight of hand*" (what true analogy!) "and that, *though* he could not yet do the trick to the same perfection, he thought that by practice he *might*,"—when, I say, the Cambridge Doctor had so expressed himself, all his adherents seemed perfectly satisfied, and joined in a chorus of approbation. Then, though a few persons present entreated Dr. W—— to stay a little while longer, and to give the thing a *little* more patient attention, he quitted the room in a hurry, and (sad to say) all his tail made their exit with him.

However, the room was none the worse for the

emptying it had undergone. The true and patient observers of Nature were thus made manifest, and the half-dozen men of real candour who remained were rewarded for their steadfastness by witnessing a series of most satisfactory phenomena.

Again, I have met with men who, without rudeness, have manifested, in seeing Mesmerism, an extraordinary vacillation of character. They propose their own tests, which, should we comply, and satisfactorily undergo the ordeal, they declare they will believe and be converted. All this has been done to their wish: the experiment has succeeded: yet they have said (unconscious truth!) "We *cannot* believe!" *A propos* of this, I remember the following instance:—A Doctor, at Antwerp, who was hostile to Mesmerism, was allowed at a *séance* to impose his own tests, the object of which was to demonstrate vision by abnormal means. He said beforehand, "If the Somnambulist" (a young lady) "tells me what is in my pocket, I will believe." The patient, having entered into Somnambulism, was asked by him the question, "What is in my pocket?" She immediately replied, "A case of lancets." "It is true," said the Doctor, somewhat startled, "but the young lady may know that I am of the medical profession, and that I am likely to carry lancets; and this may be a guess. But, if she will tell me the number of lancets in the case, I will believe." The number of lancets was told. The sceptic still said, "I cannot yet believe, but if the form of the case is accurately described, I must yield to conviction." The form of the case *was* accurately described. "This is certainly very singular," said the Doctor, "very indeed—but—still—I cannot believe! But, if the young lady

can tell me the colour of the velvet that lines the case that contains the lancets, I really *must* believe! The question was put; the young lady said directly, "The colour is dark blue;" and the Doctor allowed she was right. But did he fulfil his promise of believing? He went away repeating, "Very curious! still I cannot believe!"

Precisely similar to the above was the late Mr. Shiel's behaviour one night at the late Mr. Bulteel's, when I shewed him a young man, Mesmerised by myself, who was to prove to him, by his own wish, the phenomenon of Mesmeric vision! Nothing could be more courteous than the conduct of Mr. Shiel—in this respect a pleasing contrast to that of the general opponent; no one could appear more willing to try a fair experiment: but, after naming his own tests, and seeing them all successfully gone through, he was reduced to the same recalcitration, "I cannot believe." We began by bandaging the Somnambulist's eyes, a process on which I must make a few remarks. It has often been objected to on the ground of insufficiency. Some have argued that persons can peep under, or over, a bandage. Moreover, it has been said, with some show of reason, "If a Somnambulist can really see through a bandage, why cannot he see things shut up in a box?" I answer thus,—If the object to be seen is never held either above or below the bandage, but only presented directly in front of it, the first objection falls to the ground. As to the second, it would be quite sufficient to say, that the thing *is* so. One must accept a fact as one finds it. But I can say more than this. In the first place, I allow it to be perfectly true, that, while some Somnambulists do,

though rarely, see what is shut up in a box, (as did the young lady the lancets,) others again see only those objects which are admitted to contact with light and air. But, secondly, these last words may perhaps supply an explanation of the apparent inconsistency. That very contact of the object with light and air may be an essential part of the matter—a necessary condition of the phenomenon. Allowing that anything resembling vision, unless it be wholly supernatural, which we deny, must come through a medium that shall at once touch the optic nerve and the object which is to be perceived, we cannot be surprized that the degree of abnormal vision should vary with the nature of the obstacles interposed, or that such an all but total exclusion from the media as a box would effect might altogether close the necessary communication between the nerve and the object, and so prevent the abnormal vision.* In short, that the two conditions are totally different—namely, of the bandage and of the box—is proved by the general feeling that additional difficulty pertains to the latter, and by the persistence of opponents to reject the bandage and to call for the box. But this does not prove that for a person to see with bandaged eyes, when proper precautions are taken, is not an

* This reasoning will shew the fallacy of the Reviewer's magnanimous resolution,—"Our scepticism," says he, "will continue till one of Major Buckley's 148 Clairvoyants will (qy., shall?) perform the easy task of reading five lines of Shakespeare, shut up in five separate boxes." There are other reasons also why Somnambulists cannot perform a cut and dried task perversely allotted them. The best rope-dancer tumbles if he thinks about his rope. What I know is, that Alexis, being at ease with me, directly and without boggling read in sleep-waking part of a printed paper and a letter, which, enclosed in an envelope, were put into his hand.

extraordinary thing, and something quite different to normal vision. To say, "I will not believe the bandage under any circumstances," is plainly but unreasonable obstinacy.

Everything must, it is plain, depend on the precautions taken in applying the bandages, and in presenting the object. That the first may be so applied, and the latter so presented, as to render bad faith and trickery impossible, cannot but be allowed. This at least did Mr. Shiel, whom with myself and the Somnambulist, and some fifty other persons present at the experiment I have kept too long waiting, candidly admit. All he asked was permission to choose the bandage, and to arrange it on the patient himself. A large silk handkerchief was brought, which, according to Mr. Shiel's particular request was black, because he said (but why I could not exactly tell) that this was more satisfactory and shut out the light better. This was tightly bound round the eyes of the Somnambulist, till his nose (not a very prominent one) was almost painfully flattened. Then Mr. Shiel plugged both above and below with cotton, which took him a long time to arrange. At last he declared himself satisfied that vision after the ordinary mode was impossible, and he gave a playing card to the Somnambulist, who held it above his head, and told what it was in a moment. Mr. Shiel examined the cotton, and declared it had not moved. But said he, "I would rather have black cotton if such a thing is to be had, for I think that white cotton admits the light." We asked for black cotton, and to my surprize (for I did not know of such an article quite as well as of a black swan) the young ladies of the house brought down from the mysteries

of their wardrobe some wadding, which, if not quite black, was at least very dark grey. This was arranged, and still all the cards that were presented to the Somnambulist were correctly told. Mr. Shiel said, "This is very wonderful, I admit. But the Somnambulist is himself permitted to hold the cards, and, though he tells them most rapidly, still he holds them for an instant either below or above the bandage; and, though I am satisfied it is next to impossible for him to see by the usual means, I own I should be more satisfied if you would present a card, without letting the young man touch it, immediately in front of the bandage. If only *one* experiment (so conducted) succeeds, I then will believe. Only you will see he will not do it." *But he did.* I conducted the experiment strictly as I was told. I held the card with its back to the Somnambulist and its face towards Mr. Shiel, till the moment when it was directly opposite the bandage, then turned it; and it was instantly and correctly named. But did Mr. Shiel believe? He was silent a moment, and then made a singular sound of surprize (at his own unbelief probably) which ended in, "I cannot believe!" When all was over, and the guests were departing, Mr. Shiel said to me, "That young man has done wonderful things. He has done what none of us could have done. Still I cannot believe!"

Different to this shuffling, yet ending in the same result, is another crying sin, of which our opponents are guilty towards us. When they prescribe an experiment, they couple it with some condition, which, in his knowledge, the Mesmeriser disapproves, and which is certain to ensure failure; or again, they prevent the Mesmeriser from laying

down his own conditions. These also are peculiarities of conduct expressly reserved for the benefit of Mesmerism. Who dreams of telling Faraday, "You must perform your experiment; but you must use such an acid, or you must not on any account bring into play that galvanic battery?

You will tell me that Mesmerism is not a fixed physical science like Magnetism or Chemistry: I answer, So much the greater need to bring it under laws. Besides, though a wonder, Mesmerism is not so exceptional as to be able to dispense with certain rules. She has her own conditions, and cannot accept those of other people. With her, as with every practical art, counteracting causes must always be taken into account, and, if possible, removed out of the way. It is my full belief, that, of these preventive influences, there is not, as yet, a full understanding. Though not an electrical phenomenon, Mesmerism is a vital one: and we know that not even metals, or wood, are more affected by the changes of the atmosphere than the human nerves. Every one is acquainted with the fact that in fine weather we have many tons weight of air more upon our heads than when it rains, and to a large proportion of mankind that fact is indicated by certain sensations as plainly as by the fluctuations of the barometer, which rises or sinks from the same cause. I suspect therefore that the condition of the atmosphere may, physically, have much to do with the development of Mesmeric phenomena, and may partly explain that extreme variability of patients which sets at nought calculation, and, above all, the cut and dried theory of Suggestion.

The more or less of electricity* may be an element in the case, and account, in a measure, for the "*disposé*" and "*pas disposé*" of Somnambulists. This, however is only a supposition; but what is certain is, that all mental causes of disturbance are powerful in counteracting the production of Mesmeric phenomena. Contrary to the common notion, anything like what is generally called "nervousness" is a great impediment in the way. You may frighten a nervous person into an hysterical affection; but this is not Mesmerism. The phenomenon, too, so far obeys the usual laws of sleep, that any anxiety or expectation mars the production of it. The Mesmeriser does not therefore —though to please others he may *try—undertake* to mesmerise, we will say, a blind person who is put into a chair and who knows that something unusual is going to happen to him. The fairer experiment would be to commence mesmerising a blind person who was *not* put into a chair in a set manner, and who did *not* know that any company were present. But this encreased ignorance would be difficult to compass: for the blind are watchful, and detect by the ear, or by some other sense, the presence of a stranger immediately. Yet at the same time they live much in a world of their own, and, though our Reviewer supposes that automatic trains of thought are apt to induce coma, I have ever found the internal preoccupation of subjects unfavourable to their being mesmerised. Thus, two opposite causes—outward

* I have been told of a lady whose Mesmeric power is greatly encreased by her being, when she mesmerises, mounted on a stool with glass legs.

watchfulness, and internal thought—render the blind difficult of mesmerisation. Nor to one who considers the subject ought this to appear "suspicious." Yet I have known persons of undoubted acquirements, and incapable of any consciously unfair judgment, select the mesmerising of a blind person as the *experimentum crucis*, and, when it failed, consider Mesmerism to have received its *coup de grâce*. I know also an instance of one of these having the true candour to confess, after I had explained the matter, that the experiment had not been tried under circumstances which were favourable to its success.

The same fault, viz., of imposing conditions on the wrong side, was demonstrated two or three years ago at Geneva by some of the "*Savans*" there, who, with a laudable desire to test the reality of Mesmerism, engaged a Mesmeriser and his Somnambulist, a certain Madlle. Prudence, to exhibit before them. They insisted on imposing their own conditions, and (which was equally wrong on the part of the performers) this demand was, after a long discussion and correspondence, agreed to almost unreservedly. Now there are different sorts of Somnambulists. Some do not care who besides the Mesmeriser puts questions to them, or tries experiments upon them. Others will receive every trial through the Mesmeriser himself only. Of this latter kind, it appears, was Madlle. Prudence. But the "*Savans*" insisted on the experiments and questions coming through *them*. Thus there was a complication of errors in the very outset. Be it also remarked that a fault which I alluded to some time ago was committed. Mesmerism was to stand or

fall by clairvoyance; the faculty to which Madlle. Prudence chiefly lay claim being, unfortunately, what is called "thought-reading." Then an absolute wrong was perpetrated. The precautions which the learned conclave took implied distrust of the Mesmeric performers and inferred collusion from the beginning. Madlle. Prudence only professed to read the thoughts of her Mesmeriser, and ordinarily the affair was conducted in this way. Some person present at the *séance* either whispered to the Mesmeriser an account of some event that he wished to have re-pictured to him, or wrote it down for the Mesmeriser alone to see. Then the Mesmeriser put himself *en rapport* with the Mesmerisee, and the latter was to tell and describe what the former had been previously informed of. In this mediatory way of doing things, it seems very possible that the Somnambulist, like the mysterious lady, might learn the thing to be divined by means of preconcerted signals between herself and the Mesmeriser. But this infers bad faith. Now bad faith there might have been, but, if the *Savans* chose to have these people for experiment at all, they had no right to presuppose bad faith. I should have said, "Either have nothing to do with them, or fulfil their conditions." The whole thing was ill-conducted, and so ensured many failures, of which the Genevese tribunal published rather a too triumphant account. To be glad an experiment has *not* succeeded shews how deep was the prejudice with which it was undertaken. However, notwithstanding these drawbacks, some extraordinary things occurred—one even with regard to thought-reading—and it was remarkable that this took place on the sole occasion when the

proper conditions *were* fulfilled, when, tired out with seeing nothing but blunders, the company allowed the interrogation to pass through the Mesmeriser. One of the examiners had witnessed a terrible event in his life, that had made a great impression upon him; he had seen a child fall from the top of a wall, and its brains dashed out. This circumstance he wrote down, and presented the document to the Mesmeriser, who read the paper, returned it to the questioner, and then undertook, by means of "*rapport*," to convey the story to the brain or thought of Madlle. Prudence, who, with closed eyes, stood with her back to the Mesmeriser. The rest of the story shall be told from the printed document.

"*Twelfth Experiment.*

"Mr. Bourrit (a clergyman) informs M. Lassaigne (the Mesmeriser) in another room, by writing, of a circumstance which he once witnessed, and on which he is now fixing his thoughts.

"M. Lassaigne is desirous of transferring this event to the mind of his subject by means of manual contact.

"*Placed behind the Somnambulist,* he makes sundry passes, lifting up his arms, and fixing his eyes on the ceiling. Then he sits down beside Madlle. Prudence, and presses on the palm of her hand, which is quite spread out.

"Madlle. Prudence.—'Why do you make me climb so high? I see some one who alarms me. It is a child. Ah! the child has fallen down!' said she, shuddering.

"Mr. Bourrit.—'The fact indicated was—*the fall*

of a child of three years old from the top of a wall twenty feet high, which happened at Berne.' "*

The *Relation d'une Séance* calls this *une épreuve de lucidité.* But why go to experiments on lucidity in order to prove the two simple points at issue—which are "the human influence," and the "Mesmeric Medium?" Were our Judges and Jurymen to content themselves with plain unpretending proofs of the above, they would easily, (if so they pleased) satisfy their scrupulous minds with regard to them. One single specimen of correlative attraction in obedience to a pass made by a Mesmeriser in such a way that every unprejudiced person in the room shall say—"*There*, at least, suggestion was impossible!"—would set the matter at rest for ever. And this may be seen any day and every day wherever there is a Mesmeriser and a subject. *A propos* of this, let me be allowed to relate a conversation to which I was ear-witness.

Dr. Elliotson,—"What then do you think Mesmerism to be?"

* Textually thus,—

"*Douzième Expérience.*

"M. Bourrit indique par écrit à M. Lassaigne, dans une chambre séparée, un fait auquel il songe, et dont il a été témoin.

"M. Lassaigne désire transmettre l'idée par l'attouchement des mains. Placé derrière la somnambule, il fait plusieurs passes en élevant les bras et fixant des yeux sur le plafond. Puis il s'assied à coté d'elle, et soutient sur la face palmée de sa main, celle toute étendue de Mlle. Prudence.

"Mlle. Prudence.—'Pourquoi me faites vous monter si haut? Je vois une personne qui me fait peur . . . . c'est un enfant . . . . Ah! l'enfant est tombé!' dit-elle en tressaillant.

"M. Bourrit.—'Le fait indiqué était: *La chute d'un enfant de trois ans, du haut d'une muraille de vingt pieds de hauteur, à Berne.*'"

Mr. H.—All imagination!"

Dr. Elliotson.—"What did you see Mr. G—— do, when he was mesmerised?"

Mr. H.—"I saw his hand follow the hand of his Mesmeriser."

Dr. Elliotson.—"Do you think Mr. G—— could *see* the Mesmeriser's hand, or be otherwise aware of it?"

Mr. H.—"I do not think he could: for the Mesmeriser's hand was lying behind him on the back of the chair, and the Mesmeriser stood behind."

Dr. E.—"Have you perfect confidence in both the Mesmeriser and the Mesmerised?"

Mr. H.—"Certainly. They are gentlemen incapable of deception or collusion."

Dr. E.—"Then, granting there was neither deception nor collusion, and that Mr. G—— could not see, or be otherwise aware of the position of the Mesmeriser's hand, to what do you attribute Mr. G.'s hand rising in the air, and going back to meet the hand of the Mesmeriser? Could that be all imagination?"

No answer!

Does not this shew, that, if the common concessions, which would be made in any other case, were granted in this, Mesmerism would be an established thing?

And what will be thought of the *fairness* of the Geneva Savans, when the reader is told that their pamphlet called *Relation d'une Séance*, &c., from which I have quoted the experiment concerning lucidity, sums up as if Mesmerism were a dead and gone thing, *because* of the general failures in lucidity,

when all the time the Mesmeric Medium was thus proved by these men of science?

The last proof that I shall give of the disingenuousness of our opponents, of their real wish to *avoid* learning the truth, is, that they invariably decline to become Mesmerisers themselves.

Yet they might do this; we invite them to do this; and it is the best and surest mode whereby a man may convince himself; the only mode by which a man may erect himself into a judge of anything. "*Experientia docet,*" says the old school-lesson: to which, at the risk of being thought

"Full of wise saws and *ancient* instances,"

I venture to add one more piece of wisdom of our ancestors—"Practice makes perfect." In no case can any possible amount of knowledge supersede the necessity of personal investigation: in any case, personal familiarity with a subject gives power on that subject. Even a Linnæus goes into the fields to gather information at first hand: even an idiot boy of Berne (the celebrated Menn)* learns, by living with cats, to draw cats in so life-like a way that I have seen a real pussy set up her back at one of his priceless representations of her kind. In short, I think an ignoramus knows more of a thing with which he is conversant, than a sage of a thing which he studies in his closet. I would rather go to a peasant than a philosopher to learn when to plant my vege-

* Menn died at an early age, of grief for the loss of his favourites: who were ordered to be put to death by a decree of the council at Berne, in consequence of a malady that was raging amongst the feline tribe.

tables: for the latter might mistake between a cabbage and a cabbage-rose. From all which wisdom comes the following receipt for making genuine good brains. "Experimentalize for yourself, and experimentalize often!"

If this advice be generally good, it is more especially so in the present case, and that for two reasons.

Mesmerism is a subject on which everybody *ought* to convince himself experimentally.

Mesmerism is a subject on which everybody *may* convince himself experimentally.

The knowledge is essential; the proof easy.

The knowledge is essential: for a man's own sake: for the sake of those with whom he is surrounded.

For a man's own sake.

In order that he may correct his habits of thought, expand his ideas, learn candour, be at the level of his age.

Since Mesmerism is making claims on men's belief, yet is a thing which overpasses daily experience, every honest man and true thinker will naturally seek evidence of it for himself. And herein lies the peculiar advantage of Mesmerism. In most matters, the greater part of mankind are obliged to believe on hearsay. Who is it that has personally witnessed a thousand things which yet everybody believes? But Mesmerism lies level to all the world, open to all the world. It is not an historic record, but a thing of our day. It is capable to every one of more than oral or written proof. It may be submitted to personal demonstration.

This possibility of more than fulfilling the vulgar adage, "Seeing is believing," of substituting for it,

—"*doing* is *believing*," sets Mesmerism immensely above most other things. Who would not make a few passes in order to assure himself that a kind of miracle may be performed? Dull and incurious, or deeply prejudiced, must be the man who declines the truest means of satisfying himself on a point so interesting. And is not this in our favour, that we are not a parcel of eclectics or mysterious adepts, who would keep knowledge within our own small circle. All that we desire is that everybody should conduct for himself a series of experiments in Mesmerism. To obtain proper evidence of the existence of a peculiar medium, let a doubter begin by trying the passes where Suggestion cannot be an ingredient in the case. Let him mesmerise babies, if he will. I have seen even an idiot infant, who never otherwise slept, thrown, in five minutes, into a mesmeric sleep so sound that it was tost about and thrown on a bed without the possibility of waking it. Or let any one make experiments on brutes, above all, on birds. I have had, in two instances, birds which were so easily affected by Mesmerism that the head followed the finger, even when held out of sight, as iron follows the magnet. One of the birds, when once put to sleep, as it was thoroughly by mesmeric action, could be tost into the air, and caught again in the hand like a ball. This was a species of tom-tit. The other, a nightingale, was still more susceptible. It could be mesmerised by the eye of any person with whom it was familiar; and would, if fixedly looked at, even from across a room, (it was generally allowed the liberty of the apartment,) stretch out its wings level with the table on which it might be perching,

close its eyes, and so, in that state, manifest attraction of the head to the human hand, from side to side.*

That every bird should be so sensitive to the human influence is indeed not to be expected. Every tyro, whether he try to mesmerise birds or men, must make up his mind to many failures, but in this he will only be like any other neophyte on any other subject.

Dogs are difficult to mesmerise because of their natural watchfulness; but fish (strange but true!) are so easily affected by mesmerism,† that I have no doubt the old proverb about "tickling a trout" was founded on observation. Fish kept in glass bowls will recognize the hands of particular persons, and seem to have pleasure in being taken out of the water by these; while, on the contrary, no amount of habit reconciles them to being touched, or even approached, by certain other hands. I once restored to animation by mesmeric passes several fish that had been apparently killed by shocks from an immense horse-shoe magnet, which was used in a lecture on terrestrial magnetism; and these fish, the lecturer assured me, would have never revived in ordinary circumstances.

Such facts as these are so convincing that no Mesmeriser doubts of an agent—the point that indi-

* This reminds me of an anecdote Mr. Babbage related to me of a tame bird he had, which when he looked at it always flew from a distance towards his face, as if by some power of attraction.

† See Dr. John Wilson's pamphlet, published in 1839,—*Trials of Animal Magnetism on the Brute Creation*, by John Wilson, Physician to the Middlesex Hospital, M.D., Cantab., and Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, Paternoster Row.

vidualizes the object of his study—the point on which, from the beginning, the *Quarterly* Reviewer tries to throw discredit.

In the course of his experience, every Mesmeriser is sure to meet with a thousand little circumstances, often springing up unexpectedly, which indicate a dynamic force—a "Rapport"—a medium. Nay, though Biology is to Mesmerism what Quackery is to Medicine, I am quite sure that every sincere person must allow that in biologizing, or hypnotizing, he meets constantly with phenomena which Suggestion will not solve, but which Mesmerism will. Let no one, then, presume to judge Mesmerism till he has experimentally tried it. Short of this he knows nothing. With this he will never go back.

Our *Quarterly* friend indeed, at his old work of asserting, declares that all near investigation is unfavourable to the cause of Mesmerism, and (as usual), from his own allegation, he deduces the silliness of the believer. Appended to this *ipse dixit*, we find a hint that some, who have looked keenly into Hypnotism, have deserted from our ranks.

I fearlessly say that no *practical* Mesmeriser ever went that course—it was some dawdling *diletante* perhaps—some pseudo-man-of-science—some timid Doctor, afraid of losing his patients (let us hope he has a wife and children to salve over his conscience), or some oracle of a club, who has a vast reputation for common (*too* common) sense, who stands well with a certain set, and who feels that if he be true to truth, "Othello's occupation's gone." Or it may be some weak vacillating creature, in whose blood is a natural touch of the Renegado, and who would turn Turk on the slightest provocation. Such losses

are our gain. They are like cutting rotten branches from a tree, which is more healthy for the excision. But never has a true heart left us—never has a Mesmeriser, worthy by practice of that name, ceased to look on Mesmerism but as Mesmerism; that is, a speciality with a special agent.

These things being so, and experiments, when conducted in the right direction, always ready at hand, why is it that our adversaries decline the test of personal practice?

Precisely because there is no *argumentum ad hominem* so forcible as personal practice. Precisely for the same reason that they choose the most rare and difficult proofs of Mesmerism, when common and easy ones would be adequate to convince any reasonable person. Precisely for the same reason that they are glad when an experiment has *not* succeeded. That reason is, that they are Anti-Mesmerists and wish to remain so. They are not in earnest either in desiring to know anything about Mesmerism, or in seeking to investigate it with us as friends. Where there is a will, there is a way. But with them is no will, and therefore no way. Like Crabbe's young lady, who promised the lover to get up botany, but thought it sufficient to tell him, when he became husband,

"Why then, I always said I *wished* to learn,"

they never do more than cast a sheep's eye at Mesmerism.

The truth is—they are afraid of it.

It is too genuine, too uncompromising, too antagonistic to old humbug for them.

On them, therefore, rests the responsibility of their own stubbornness. And a deep responsibility it is.

From them, as from those tenebrific stars, spoken of by an old theorist, rays out that darkness which rests upon so many as regards Mesmerism.

> " 'Tis certain that the modish passions
> Descend amongst the crowd like fashions."

When men, who should be the lights of science, refuse to be illuminated, how are the eyes that look up to them to see anything clear? Ignorance is contagious. It is not only for his own sake, but for that of others (as I stated in the beginning of this part of my subject), that a man should make it a duty to inform himself on Mesmerism by every possible means.

And why?

Because Mesmerism professes to benefit man. Even, as *professing* to do this, it claims, like religion, an examination deep, patient, searching. But it *has* benefitted man—*is* benefitting man. As a means of cure, and of producing insensibility for operations, it is most demonstrably of the highest importance. Also it has none of the disadvantages attendant upon violent remedies, or dangerous opiates —such as chloroform,* for instance. But not to go to extreme cases; pain and sickness are the occasional inmates of every house; and in every house there may be a Mesmeriser to antagonize these sad elements of human life.

Let us hope that our adversaries do *not* know how much good Mesmerism does, and is capable of doing. If they did, their opposition to our art would assume

* A medical man—who would chloroform his own son, a boy of thirteen, merely to take out one of his teeth—has lately proved how dangerous is the practice. The boy died.

the character of wickedness. Yet, while there exists Sandby's book proving Mesmerism the beneficial gift of God, and Esdaile's accounts of innumerable painless operations performed under Mesmeric influence, is ignorance pardonable to any? "Ye say that ye see!"—this shutting the eyes to conviction was denounced on the highest authority as a very great sin. On the merest *primâ facie* view of the matter, all influential persons, and especially medical men, are *bound* to study Mesmerism, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

Yet, as the matter stands, it *is* the influential men, and the doctors, that seal up from the mass this sole-appointed remedy for some diseases. They enter not into the domain themselves, nor permit others to enter in. By creating prejudices against Mesmerism they prevent sick persons from untold benefits. When I see a man drugged to death, burnt with caustic, yet always getting worse, and when, after I have recommended Mesmerism to him, he only shakes his head, I sigh and say to myself, "Then you have not yet suffered enough!"

And what have I known to be the case? A doctor has excruciated a person labouring under constitutional disorder with the most horrible attempts at cure—has deserted the case as hopeless, yet has left the patient through his denunciations so frightened at the very name of Mesmerism as to block out from him hope that way also. And all these evils come

* Nor should the children of genius remain neutral on the occasion. I know many who believe, (nay, what man of genius does not? It is only learned dullness that doubts;) I pray them conscientiously to avow their convictions. My friend, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton has already led the way by having, in a note to his delightful novel of *Godolphin*, referred his readers to my *Facts in Mesmerism*.

from ignorance, and the presumption consequent on ignorance.

Oh the ignorance, the gross ignorance—oh the presumption, the gross presumption, that prevails with regard to Mesmerism! Oh the nonsense that is talked about it! And everybody sets up to talk about it. As the *Times* says about the pictures in the National Gallery, "There is no other subject on which so much trash is talked." Even a man ignorant of horse-flesh will hesitate about speaking on the points of a horse, but he who is incompetent to judge of anything else thinks himself competent to judge of Mesmerism.

Every remark of the most candid of its opponents proves that his mind is in Egyptian darkness about it; and the least practised adept knows and feels this.

Hence it happens that, in weaker minds, the objections to Mesmerism assume a moral cast: for though, at one moment, it is too contemptible for notice—a folly—a mere nothing; yet, at another, it is something frightfully potent, hideously satanic. Surely *both* cannot be true! *Were*, indeed, Mesmerism what some deem it to be, the world could not go on. "Why do not stock-jobbers make use of it to learn the fluctuations of the money-market?" asks a grave elderly gentleman. "Oh!" cries a middle-aged lady, "do not sit by me! I know you will mesmerise me against my will!" Another of the same gentle sex, but shewing by her staid attire a decided leaning towards Evangelism, exclaims, "Oh, my dear Sir, if you can mesmerise persons at a distance, I feel sure that Satan has something to do with it." Another of a different cast—perhaps a

strong-minded woman—assures me seriously, that, since I believe in Mesmerism, I must be very superstitious, and must inevitably believe in Spirit-rapping.

Should I recommend Mesmerism to suffering persons as a cure for their maladies, they "would not for the whole world be mesmerised," because, then, they would be at the mercy of the Mesmeriser. And, on no account, would they give up into other hands the guidance of themselves.

In vain does the rational Mesmerist explain that Mesmerism is so guarded and bounded by an All-wise Providence—that its higher states are so rare, and so capricious—often so little to be depended on, and, if to be depended on, so pure, so incapable of being suborned to evil purposes, that no harm is likely to come of it. Ignorance *will not* be enlightened; and, though it is remarkable that persons who have not been perverted from nature—the peasant, the child—have no dread of Mesmerism, yet to the masses it remains the same incongruous alarming thing as ever. The sceptical body still thinks it all credulity: the bigot still persists in being sure it is all from beneath.

And the more common sense we are about it, the less are we attended to, or believed.

Reader, hast thou never observed that even a modest liar gains less credence than a bold impudent Major Long-bow sort of fellow? Now Mesmerism presents too many genuine wonders to the Mesmerist for him to be tempted towards invention and falsehood. On the contrary, if he be a man of any judgment, he is disposed to soften, to palliate, to under-state, and even altogether to suppress, some facts which, though they have fallen under his observation, might come under the head of—"Too won-

derful to be believed." But does this moderation profit him? Not a whit! Let a Mesmerist tell the marvels of his experience; people prick up their ears. Let him speak of the humble utility of Mesmerism; people look down to the ground. Talk of Clairvoyance; they, at least, start. Talk of cures; they yawn. They want the marvellous—they consider a tame Mesmerist a very poor animal. Like the Siberians with the magic mirror, they are quite angry if some calm observer explains to them the *rationale* of the thing. Less than supernatural contents them not. Thus are we encouraged to the wonderful, and tempted out of the safe region of the beneficial. This is a pity.

But here, hoping that I have shewn that all our faults (if we have any) are forced upon us by the faults of the enemy, I close my list of Mesmeric grievances.

We will now examine the present state of public opinion as regards Mesmerism. On this subject, indeed, it might appear from many things stated above as if the parties concerned were somewhat in the position of the combatants in the *Critic,* each being so placed under the presented daggers of the other that all are at a dead lock. Our opponents will not believe our facts, and we cannot perceive any force in their arguments. How then are we to get on or off the stage of our controversy? Reader, so the matter appears. But have you never stood at Margate or Brighton to see the tide come in? You cannot tell for some time whether there is any for-

ward motion in the billows. Sometimes they seem to go back. It is only when you look at some stone that was lately dry but is now covered by the water, that you see how truly and rapidly, with all its appearance of being stationary, the sea is gaining upon the beach. So is it as regards the progress of Mesmerism. The tide is coming in.

Primâ facie, the *Quarterly Review* places the question where it was years ago. In reality this very *Review* affords evidence of a vast change about it in public opinion. In the first place, the *Review* admits facts which once were pooh-poohed with all possible ridicule. The marvels related by the Reviewer, *à propos* of Suggestion, rival, perhaps exceed, any marvels of ours. In one respect they certainly *do* exceed ours. They call for an extra amount of faith in requiring us to accept, at one and the same time, both them and the Reviewer's inadequate explanation, which is, like Sheridan's interpreter, the harder of the two to understand. Thus we find a young lady in somnambulism represented as recognizing her deceased brother's hair, and snatching at a locket, worn by her sister, in which the hair was, though there were circumstances which rendered such a recognition marvellous in a high degree. The Reviewer candidly acknowledges "her recognition of the locket which her sister wore, when she did not recognize the wearer, was extremely curious." But, then, following Dr. Carpenter, he says, "She may have been directed to the locket by the sense of smell; which is frequently exalted in the somnambulistic state to a remarkable degree, enabling the somnambule to find out the owner of a ring or glove

amongst a number of bystanders with as much facility as the best-trained hound." (p. 527.) This passage, though the explanation which it suggests is, as regards the case in point, ludicrously inadequate (for the somnambule did *not* smell to the locket, but snatched at it from a distance), is yet to us valuable; since it concedes the question of exalted faculty. That such a state of exalted faculty can be induced by external methods is also virtually conceded in many parts of the Reviewer's Article.

Then, heightened sensibility, extraordinary perception, encreased quickness of intelligence, muscular strength miraculously aggregated, power to resist electric shocks or powerful odours of ammonia, &c., (phenomena of which Mesmerisers have long tried to convince the world,) are, together with cataleptic rigidity, artificially induced, fully admitted by the present organ of public opinion. Even the influence of man on man is, beneath all the attempts to elude such an avowal, virtually conceded. Bear witness these sentences.

"When the state is complete, the mind of the biologized subject remains dormant, until aroused to activity by some *suggestion* which it receives through the ordinary channels of sensation, and to which it responds as automatically as a locomotive obeys the manipulations of its driver. He is, indeed, for the time, a mere *thinking automaton.* He is given up to the domination of any idea that may be made to possess him."

"Thus, he may be played upon, like a musical instrument by those about him; thinking, feeling, speaking, acting just as *they will* that he should

think, feel, speak, or act." What stronger statement than this could a Mesmeriser make respecting power exercised by one person over another?

As to the solution of this and other facts, we, and the Reviewer are, indeed, still at issue; but facts are, after all, the chief matter; and it is the repetition of facts which at length forces some great reference to a general cause upon mankind.

Not many years ago, the induction of sleep by peculiar methods was scoffed at. Nor, indeed, was it wonderful that *this* first step should be the great stumbling-block: for that sleep, the proverbially capricious deity, should descend at mortal bidding, upon weary or unweary lids, seemed a marvel in the van of other marvels. However, by dint of evidence the sleep was admitted. Then came a long interval, in which the *recusants* said, "We will believe the sleep (the world is pretty well agreed about *that*:) but as to the phenomena said to be developed in that sleep, all stuff and nonsense!"

Now, however, most of the ridiculed phenomena are themselves allowed to be true. And of that comes one farther good. Once, we Mesmerists were treated as impostors. Now, we are more politely informed, that we are generally right in our premises, and only wrong in our conclusions. Once our Facts were denied. Now only our Theory.

But the most important admission of all is respecting the curative powers of Mesmerism, which the world, on Review-authority, is now not only permitted, but encouraged to use; though, indeed, (but that does not signify,) under another name.

If we call it Hypnotism, we may do as we please about it, and by it cure as many sick folks as we

can. I extract the important information. "The *peculiar* (?) concentration of the mind in the Hypnotic state, may produce still more striking results" (*i. e.*) than the phenomena of "expectant attention." It is found, accordingly, that the pulsation of the heart, and the respiratory movements, may be accelerated or retarded; and various secretions altered both in quantity and quality.

A lady, who was leaving off nursing from defect of milk, was hypnotized by Mr. Braid, and, *whilst she was in this state,* he made passes over the right breast *to call her attention to it.* In a few minutes, her gestures shewed that *she dreamt* that the baby was sucking, and, in two minutes, the breast was distended with milk, at which she expressed, *when awakened,* the greatest surprise. The flow of milk from that side continued abundant, and, *"to restore symmetry to her figure" (rien que ça?)* Mr. Braid subsequently produced the same change on the other side; after which, she had a copious supply for nine months. (!)

So sayeth the Review, and (Reader, now attend,) thus the mighty We proceeds to bestow on us our diploma.

"We are satisfied that, if applied with discrimination, the process will take rank as one of the most potent methods of treatment, and Mr. Braid's recent Essay on Hypnotic Therapeutics, SEEMS TO US (!) *to deserve the attentive consideration of the medical profession."*

Happy Mr. Braid! Here have been Mesmerisers for years saying all that Mr. Braid says—pressing Mesmerism by precept and illustration on the world —Here has been *The Zoist* with accounts of the best

authenticated cures dating its existence from a long ante-Braid period—Yet, because we have called our agent Mesmerism, and Mr. Braid calls it Hypnotism, we are scouted, while Mr. Braid obtains much "κῦδος" (as we used to say at school). But for this partiality there is a deeper ground. Mr. Braid, by suggesting Suggestion to the Reviewer, seems thus to explode our agent—that "*monstrum horrendum*," "the occult power, to be ranked among the cosmical forces, but not to be identified with any one of those previously recognized!" So the Reviewer makes common cause with Mr. Braid. That is well understood. But now let me beg my reader to observe carefully those passages in the story about the milk, which this time I, and not the Reviewer, have thrown into Italics.

So difficult does the Reviewer find it to relate the circumstance in such words as shall not compromise him, that he is (not for the first time) guilty of nonsense. Observe—The Lady is "hypnotized," in other words, *already* "*suggestified*," and therefore in the deepest state of abstraction, reverie, or automatonism, (whichever the Reader likes to call it.) She being thus withdrawn from the external world, and so fast asleep as to be capable of dreaming, [for she only *dreamt* that the baby was sucking, a circumstance only indicated by her gestures (?)] Mr. Braid, "*while she was in that state*," viz., of perfect abstraction, "made passes over her right breast *to call her attention to it*." Oh marvellous! Persons already fast asleep, dreaming even, can have attention drawn to any particular part of their bodies, not even by a touch, but only by making passes "*over*" that part.

This looks terribly like a medium between the passes and the part! and the passes seem to us to have much more to do with the flow of milk than does our old friend Suggestion. Observe, also, "in *two minutes* the breast was distended with milk!" How rapidly must our old friend act. Surely it *might* be a little more rational to suppose that the passes, exciting the breast, produced the flow of milk, dream and all.

Surely in this case, it would be more philosophical to reason from the physical to the mental, than from the mental to the physical!

Then, so little does the Lady know of her "Suggestion" and her "dream," so completely has she gone into the "land where all things are forgotten," that, "when *awakened*" (not when *awaking*) she "expressed the greatest surprise." If this be not Mesmerism, what is it?

And this flow—nay, a copious supply—of milk lasted for nine months! Here, at least, we join issue with the Reviewer. We say, here is a beneficial phenomenon; to which I add, call it Suggestion, Hypnotism, what you will, only reproduce it as often as a poor, suffering mother calls for such a benefit.

There is, however, a reason why the regular Mesmeriser ought to have priority in these matters. His method is the quietest and the most sure. Biology and Hypnotism cause great tension of the nerves, and have often unhappy effects on both agent and patient. Cases have been recently related to me of both men and ladies, who, from experimentalizing in Biology, have suffered extremely in health. Let

not, then, the world, seduced by novelty, cry out that the Abana and Pharpar of Biology are better than the Jordan of Mesmerism.

As a pendant to the Reviewer's case of the Lady and her flow of milk, I give the following, which *did* occur under Mesmerism.

The circumstance was told me by a medical man, who has the boldness to believe in our art, though I believe he never practised it but on the following occasion.

A poor woman had an abscess of the breast, to attend which Dr. M—— was called in. The complaint was of the worst kind. The patient could not bear the diseased part to be touched ever so lightly: yet a speedy operation was essential. Dr. M——, from circumstances in the patient's constitution, had fears of chloroform, and opiates were out of the question. In this dilemma, suddenly it struck the Doctor, that he might try to Mesmerise the patient. Having merely gained her consent to make passes over her, which he said would do her good, he proceeded, without further "Suggestion," to the work.

Where Nature requires the Mesmeric sleep, it is not slow to come. In ten minutes, the poor woman was in the deepest trance: and then and there, Dr. M—— lanced the breast, handled it without exciting the least sensation, and, to use his own expression, "Squeezed it like an orange." When the patient was awoke, she would not, till she had ocular and palpable demonstration, believe that an operation had been performed.

The next day, in furtherance of the cure, Dr. M—— wished to mesmerise the patient again—but, mark the sequel. The woman had, in the mean-

time, learned from a neighbour that she had been "mesmerised!"—that the soothing and simple operation of hand-waving, whereby she had been made to sleep, was that horrid, wicked thing called "Mesmerism"—that witchcraft, of which the patient had heard always with trembling. In fine, her husband forbade any further application of the beneficial "gift of God."

Further instances are being daily made known to me of maladies relieved by Mesmerism.

It was only yesterday, that a lady related to me the case of a gentleman of her acquaintance who has been almost entirely cured of St. Vitus's dance by Mesmerism. Again, Sivori, the violonist, having been upset near Geneva, and, having fractured his left wrist, was pronounced by the faculty to be disabled for ever in that member, so essential to the performance of his art. He was, however, after being given up by the doctors, mesmerised by La Fontaine, and so recovered the powers of the injured member as to be able to play, subsequently, in public at Lausanne, with all his accustomed brilliancy. He brought M. La Fontaine with him, and, between each of his pieces, he went into another room to have his arm mesmerised.

Another advantage that the Review in the Quarterly has given us is, that we now have the *ultimatum* of our opponents. The enemy has not, indeed, become a friend, but is reduced to his last intrenchments. According to the Frenchman's mis-translation, "*voilà la dernière chemise*" of the Anti-Mesmerists. All that is now denied is the dynamic agent, and clairvoyance. We have, besides, at last, the hypothesis of our antagonists. They have long

had ours. Ours was too much for them. Their's, alas, proves too little for us! But, at any rate, we know where we are. The ground is narrowed; the real question is fairly got at; the combat, hand-to-hand, may begin. Thus all that was meant for the destruction of Mesmerism ends to her advantage. Everything lends her a helping hand. Instead of being smothered under the feather-bed of Biology, she starts up refreshed. New discoveries give her new impetus; even turning-tables send her forward on her course; even Spirit-rapping knocks additional energy into her. The Article in the *Quarterly* itself stands as a landmark to her conquests, and a durable monument of her triumphs. And it is about her that the interest is grouped and concentrated. As amber embalms flies, she consecrates the trivialities even of a Review. Just as we read the memoirs of Sir Hudson Lowe only to get at everything about Napoleon, the world reads what comes out against Mesmerism only for Mesmerism's sake.

Even our adversaries are only trying, *really*, to get out of their scrape, and to come gracefully to terms with us. They desire, as we *hope* (!) the Emperor of Russia does with regard to the Western Powers, after a few nominal victories, to conclude a treaty of peace. Denying that they stir, they are yet converging to our central point. They are on the turn. Reader, they are just in the position of some persons whom I have lately beheld under some of the new experiments: for know that not only tables revolve by the imposition of hands, but human beings.

For the phenomenon I do not attempt to account: but this I have seen—stout men, resolute men, incredulous men, with a chain of hands round them,

have turned; but so insensibly, so unconsciously, that they have gone on denying that they moved, till, when told to look at a picture that was once opposite to them, but was at last nearly behind their backs, they have reluctantly admitted the fact of their rotation. "Did we push you?" have cried the ladies or gentlemen who formed the chain. "Not at all," has responded the subject. "Then why do you move?" "I can't tell!" Reader, I leave you to apply the case.

Another benefit unconsciously conferred on us by the *Review* is that its inadequacy is felt. Enemies, even, of Mesmerism are not satisfied in their minds that the Theory of Suggestion is sufficient for the occasion.* And that the question is not considered decided, one feature of the times will shew. Experimentalizing goes on, to a degree never before known in the history of the world. Marvels that once would have condemned their operators to the stake are now become drawing-room amusements. Singular states of man, the very existence of which was once doubted, are now, it is found, capable of being induced; and accordingly, all over the civilized world, over realms on which the sun never sets, from mighty Orellana to farthest Ind, persons, impelled by Mother-Eve curiosity, are employed in inducing them; in hypnotizing, biologizing, and strongly suggesting. If men can do nothing else towards the general enlightenment, they can at least all turn tables, and so tables are set spinning by every hand. The fashion spreads from the cottage to the throne. The Em-

* I have heard, on good authority, that the great De la Rive of Geneva has pronounced over the Article in the *Quarterly*—"Inadequate!"

peror of Russia is reported to be engaged, less in devising how to get Turkey, than how to make tables revolve. Is the Emperor of Austria supposed to be in strictest conference with his minister? Not a bit of it! He is turning tables. Even of the Pope it is whispered, that, when he was represented as playing at billiards for his health's sake, this was only a decent way of expressing that he really was not making the balls spin, but the table itself. Grave clergymen, indeed, cry out lustily, "Satanic agency!" yet they not only turn the tables, but turn them to some purpose: and, as if to exemplify the old idea of a clergyman saying aside, "Do as I say, but not as I do," the more they warn the world that it is most sinful and wicked to make tables turn and rap, and bring news from "Satan's head quarters," the more they do it.

All this biologizing and turning shews that the question of a hidden agency is not decided in the negative. And on wide, general, questions the common sense of mankind may be trusted.

> "The people's voice is odd,
> It is, and it is not, the voice of God,"

says the poet. When it persists in calling for a further settlement of a great question, depend on it, it is at least the voice of truth.

No one thing that is still talked about and practised is decided in the negative. It was an enemy's prophecy that Mesmerism would be but a passing fashion of the day. Several months are elapsed since an M.D. assured me that Table-turning would be forgot in a fortnight. Yet Mesmerism flourishes, and

Table-turning continues. May the restless stir long continue! It is a symptom of life.

We hold the opinion that Daniel O'Connell held—namely, that Agitation is a mighty good thing. In the present collision of opinions, in hearty antagonism, in the repetition of experiments which, however mean, are open and level to all, experience grows, and knowledge is ever on the increase.

Not only is experimentalizing carried on, but carried on in the right direction.

At the present time, a very pertinent experiment, the object of which is to examine into the reality of "Influence at a distance," is being tried by some scientific Genevese, and by their friends, who are in correspondence with them, at Paris. At the latter place is a young woman who has been so often mesmerised by a Genevese gentleman as to be peculiarly "*en rapport*" with him. The experiment is thus conducted. At a concerted hour, some one of the committee of inquiry, who, in a manner apparently unconnected with Mesmerism, has made acquaintance with the girl at Paris, drops in, as if accidentally, to call on her. At Geneva, on the other hand, some of the investigators are present with the Mesmeriser, who, in order that all idea of collusion, or of possible Suggestion, through the visit to the girl, may be excluded, is sometimes told to Mesmerise, sometimes not. Of course, if, after a certain number of experiments, it is proved that the Mesmeric sleep of the subject invariably coincides with the Volition and Mesmeric action of the operator, the question of "Influence at a distance" will be considered as established in the affirmative. Already, as I am

informed by a friend, who is in relation with the parties, there has been one success and no failure. The experiment seems on the whole a fair one;* but I should remark that it ought to be confined to three or four times of trial. Because, after too many experiments the sensibility of a subject gets exhausted and confused; and thence, through custom, that which began by pure Mesmerism gets mixed up with Suggestion and automatic repetition, so that failures might ensue which yet would not invalidate the previous successes. Such laws of sensation, though so obvious, are not sufficiently taken into consideration by any but adepts. Yet who, after successful experiments with even physical things, such as gases for instance, does not discard the old elements as worn out and incapable of further service? Still less, who expects an eye, fatigued with gazing on a green spot, still to see green and not red—the harmonic colour? Who can behold black on black?

Only recently, when a girl in Sleep-waking had told four times correctly what I was tasting, finishing by recognizing *salt*, which was put into my mouth suddenly by a third person; she, on salt being put

* Yet it can hardly equal one that I was once enabled to make without the intervention of any (possibly suggestive) person. At Antwerp there was a young woman whom I had frequently mesmerised for nervousness, indigestion, &c. She had exhibited tokens of being sensible to my influence from a distance. I made this crucial experiment. Being at Berne, I, in the presence of witnesses, mesmerised both by thought and action my patient, who was at Antwerp, at a particular hour noted by those present and myself. In the shortest time in which a letter could reach me, came one from the patient's sister, saying that the girl had suddenly fallen into Somnambulism on the same day, and at the same hour, when I was mesmerising—but could not awake for many hours, "because Mr. T. had forgot to wake me," was her expression while under the influence. The fact was so.

instantly *again* into my mouth, became confused, and said, "There is something not agreeable, and strong; I don't know what!"

Yet, inadequately conducted as the opposite party's experiments generally are, still, that they are undertaken at all is a step towards us. And this I consider (for us) a favourable feature of the times. One thing at least is sure: our failures have not been frequent enough to bury the question. Who, moreover, would wish that any important matter should secure unanimity of opinion? As long as there is an opposition, there will be men in place and power.

Having nearly dismissed the Quarterly Reviewer out of our horizon, I would now turn to a more grateful subject—Mesmerism itself. Its best defence—its surest recommendation—will be simply to enumerate the advantages peculiar to—I might say, restricted to—its own proper domain.

The very name of Mesmerism is useful as a standard of gathering—a rallying point for many phenomena which she has not created, but appropriated, and (for herein lies her speciality) has learned, without harm and with benefit, to produce at will.

The two salient points, on which I would converge my reader's attention, are, that Mesmerism studies an important class of facts—that Mesmerism supplies an explanation in connection with those facts.

Mesmerism studies an important class of facts: important, because generally scattered over life, yet little classified; admitted in practice, yet uneasily denied in theory.

It is entirely a following up of nature. We do not invent things—we find them. Little do men reflect that, in attacking Mesmerism, they attack the being of man. Mesmerism presents a congruity with facts, that is little dreamt of by the mass.

The principal facts which I remark as exactly accordant with Mesmerism are those which, strangely enough, are most denied. They are these.

Human influence.

Curative effects.

Anomalies of sensation.

To begin with human influence, or, to state the thing in the words of our adversaries, "that exertion of power by one person over another, which was always the most suspicious feature in the Mesmeric system."

Why "the most suspicious?"

Unluckily it is the most natural.

Since it frightens the world, would we could get rid of it. We cannot! Simply because it exists. In order to get rid of it, we must push it out of life. Human beings are always exercising power over one another; and that, not only in an obvious way, but in an occult, mysterious, inscrutable way—by material, as well as mental, attractions and repulsions. The power of the strong mind over the weak has passed into a proverb. Common as it is, have we ever reflected upon its hidden causes? How much of physical mingles with the intellectual we have not defined. What power, what fascination, there may be in the colour of an eye, what virtue in the emanations for ever silently passing off from every pore, we have not guaged, nor fathomed. And, after all, there is much of popular fallacy in the notion of the in-

fluence of the strong mind over the weak. What an essay might be written on the power of the weak mind over the strong! Why is it that an ignorant Therèse rules an intellectual Rousseau? Why is it, possibly, oh! reader, (but remember I am writing to an abstraction,) that thy own housekeeper who drops, her H—es, makes you tremble if you stay too long at the club! Why also, or by what law, is deformity often preferred to beauty! Why, as some metaphysician, not Mesmerist, relates, did a man in love with a lady who squinted become himself affected by strabismus? Whence such assimilation; whence such sympathies? And whence still stronger antipathies? Methinks a deep truth dictated the well-known epigram of Martial respecting Subidus, and its still better known modern aftertype.

> "I do not like thee, Doctor Fell!
> The reason why I cannot tell,
> But this indeed I know full well,
> I do not like thee, Doctor Fell!"

Children, too, who are called unconscious physiognomists, seem often to be attracted or repelled by causes that lie deeper than physiognomy. The writer of a book called *Dietetics of the Human Soul,* (a German,) asserts, from facts known to him, that about a murderer breathes a sort of "aura," which disagreeably affects children and sensitives.

Why do such "elective affinities" govern the world —aye—why do they even extend downward to the brute chain? Why does a dog, lost in the street, follow one man and not another? Why does he attach himself for life to a particular person, unerringly selected out of millions?

And all this deeply touches on the principle of Mesmerism. Defining it as a material medium, reciprocally affecting, and affected by, animal beings, we perceive how connected it is with the above phenomena. Yet, (oh arrogance of learning!) the late M. Arago, in that sad vein of pleasantry, which distinguishes the sarcasm of the scientific, mocks at Mesmerism, just *because* he finds it capable of application to similar realities of life.*

The curative powers of Mesmerism are not less in analogy with known facts than with the hourly influence of man on man.

Nature herself goes before us, and shews us the way. Mesmerism, though proscribed, is unconsciously practised. Many persons have told me that, in illnesses, they, without knowing anything of Mesmerism, could only go to sleep when holding some particular person's hand. To the same effect is the following, from the *Life and Times of Madame de Staël*, by Maria Norris.

"Madame Necker was much troubled, during her last days, with a disposition to sleeplessness; her nights were restless and disturbed, and sometimes, in the day, worn out by want of rest, she would lean her head on her husband's arm, and thus fall asleep. Whatever might be his position, standing or sitting, so he remained, until she awoke and released him; sometimes hours elapsed, and found him thus fixed."

A German gentleman once informed me, that, in a village near the place where he was born, was an old woman, famous for stopping hœmorrhage of any kind, and for curing rheumatism—both of which she

* See article on Mesmerism in the "*Annuaire pour l'an*," 1853, published at Paris.

effected by passing a flat stone over the patient backwards and forwards. My informant's own mother, suffering from hœmorrhage, which baffled the doctors, called in this woman, and was relieved by her.

Even the Australian savage knows a process similar to mesmerising, and "strikes his hand over the place" where a comrade suffers. I have seen passages to this effect in the travels of Captains Grey and Stokes, which I have not at hand to refer to. Another Author says—

"Spitting on a diseased part is a favourite remedy amongst the blacks. They pretend thus to drive out the disease, and to *catch it in their hands;* and they then affect to carry it away, and bury it in a hole previously dug."*

I had myself, when a boy, a quantity of warts removed from my fingers—which had been burnt with caustic and done all manner of things to in vain—by a hand-charm. The Lady who performed the incantation held a pin in her hand, which she passed to and fro over the great black ugly warts. I am not conscious that I had any particular belief in the charm, or felt anything very *suggestive.*

Indeed, I believed the whole thing to be a joke, and was enormously surprised to find, in about a fortnight, all the warts gone so effectually that they never reappeared.

A consideration of facts like these, which have fallen under everybody's notice, even if an occult

* See Townsend's *Rambles and Observations in New South Wales.* (Chapman and Hall.) A little book which has given me more information about Australia, and with more vivid, life-like, portraiture, than many a larger volume.

curative power cannot be deduced from them, will at least connect Mesmerism with human influence, and shew still further its congruity with the phenomena of life. Anomalies of sensation, again, lie patent in nature, and are appropriated by Mesmerism.

These, indeed, constitute a most important domain of observation—so important, that even Arago, in his otherwise scoffing and prejudiced Article, to which I have before alluded, is forced by them into some true and admirable observations. After saying that the Mesmerism of our day is very different from that of Mesmer's day, and requires to be examined and judged on new grounds, he proceeds to acknowledge that the apparent deviations from normal sensation that it professes to induce are not to be rejected without examination as incredible. He does more: he suggests an explanation for some of the higher phenomena of anomalous sensation, and pronounces the study of them interesting. But I will give, as nearly as possible, his own words on the subject.

"The greater part of the phenomena, which are grouped about modern Somnambulism, were neither known nor enunciated in 1783. A Mesmeriser of our day says, assuredly, the least probable thing in the world, when he affirms that such or such artificial Somnambulists can see every object in the profoundest darkness, can read through obstacles, and even without using their eyes. But these things have nothing to do with the matter which Lavoisier, Franklin, or Bailly investigated; they penetrate into an entirely new domain, of which those illustrious philosophers did not even suspect the existence.

"I cannot approve" (proceeds Arago) "the tone of mind in which some of our men of science go to assist at Mesmeric experiments. *Doubt* is a proof of modesty, and is rarely prejudicial to the advance of knowledge. But we cannot say the same of *Incredulity*. Any one, who pronounces the word 'impossible!' except where mathematical certainties are concerned, is deficient in prudence. Caution is, above all, requisite where the animal organization is concerned. Our senses, notwithstanding twenty-four centuries of study and research, are far from being an exhausted subject." Arago then goes on to mention some anomalies of sensation, such as that some persons are incapable of hearing certain very sharp sounds—like the cry of the cricket, or the shriek of the bat—while others perceive colours quite differently to the rest of mankind, mistaking red for green, &c.: all of which observations were made by me long ago in my *Facts in Mesmerism*. For these reasons, Arago thinks that we do not know enough about Sensation to decide what with regard to it is possible or what is not. He thus proceeds:—

"None of the marvels of Somnambulism have excited more doubt than the assertions often made concerning a power which certain individuals, when thrown into a state of *crise*, are alleged to possess, namely, of reading a letter, from a distance, with the foot, the nape of the neck, or the stomach. The word 'impossible,' one would think, might here be legitimately employed: nevertheless, I am certain that it will not be used, even on this occasion, by any accurate philosopher, who reflects on the ingenious experiments in which Möser produces, also

at a distance, distinct images of all sorts of objects upon all sorts of substances, and in the most perfect darkness."

But the most valuable contribution of Arago to our science is the following hypothesis, whereby he not only undertakes to explain, but to shew the *à priori* possibility of, anomalous vision.

What he suggests is this :—

"If the Newtonian system of vibrations be true, one must irrevocably admit that a ray ceases to be light from the moment that its quickness is either increased or diminished, even in the ten-thousandth degree. Thence we may derive conjectures, not only natural, but worthy of the strictest verification. All men do not see by means of the same rays. Marked differences may exist in this respect, even in the same individual, according to the different states of nerves in which he may be. It is possible that the calorific rays, which convey no light to one person, may be the luminous rays that do convey light to another; and *vice versâ*. The calorific rays freely pass through certain substances, which are called diathermanous. These substances used formerly to be called *opaque*, because they transmit no ray which is generally luminous; but, at the present time, the words *opaque* and *diathermanous* have no positive meaning. Diathermanous bodies allow passage to the rays which constitute the light of some persons; but bar passage to the rays which constitute the light of other persons. Perhaps, following up this idea, we may find the key to many phenomena which, as yet, remain without any plausible explanation."

Arago concludes his essay by the following words,

which are worthy to be some of the last written by a great man, whose death has caused a gap, not to be easily filled up, in the scientific world.

True philosophers ought ever to have before their eyes these noble verses—

> "To deem that we know all, is but to place,
> Our own horizon as the bounds of space."*

If we agree (as surely every reasonable person will) with the above advice, we shall, instead of denying the phenomena either of exalted sensation, or of heightened perception, study them with the interest and impartiality which a great subject demands.

If the name of Mesmerism frighten a timid soul, let him, if he please, go to the domain of Nature (which, however, is sure to lead to Mesmerism in the end) and there, irrespectively of any alarming name, cull out for investigation those singular facts with which Nature—above all, Human Nature—lavishly abounds.

What in our asserted marvels can surpass the following instance of astonishing instinct, related by Captain Lost Stoker in his voyage of the Beagle?

"Miago had a decided, and most inexplicable, advantage over all on board, and that in a manner especially relating to the science of navigation: he could indicate at once, and correctly, the exact direction of our wished-for harbour, when neither sun nor stars were shining to assist him. He was tried frequently, and under very varying circumstances, but, strange as it may seem, he was invariably right. This faculty, though somewhat analogous to one I

* "Croire tout découvert est une erreur profonde:
C'est prendre l'horizon pour les bornes du monde."

have heard ascribed to the natives of North America, had very much surprised me when exercised on shore: but at sea, out of sight of the land, it seemed beyond belief, as it assuredly is beyond explanation."

Such things ought to make us modest. If we believe only what we can explain, we shall believe very little indeed. How futile, then, is the classification, in *the Quarterly*, of Mesmeric phenomena into such as are conformable to our experience, and such as are "in direct contrariety to it."

Supernatural is not to be confounded with *contranatural*. There is not one of the Mesmeric phenomena that can by any means fall under the latter category. Is man, who has such large discourse, "looking before and after"—man, whom we believe destined for immortality, to be so poorly judged, as that we should deny to his faculties and senses a power of extension and unknown development?

And just in this lies the advantage of Mesmerism. She appropriates a quantity of the rarer and higher phenomena of our nature, that, through pride or rash incredulity, lie neglected at our doors, yet may be studied to infinite advantage. But she not only appropriates, she examines. Mesmerism only, of all the recently discovered arts, *professes* even to reproduce *all* the phenomena which fill the realm of wonder. Development of instinct—vision at a distance; those faculties which made the seers of old all come within her range, and are by her fixed beneath the microscope of observation.

By thus bringing the miraculous to the test of experience, and to the scrutiny of our senses, we gain this further advantage. We learn truly to comprehend past wonders by those which are present, and

to unite the two in harmony. Thus is our sphere of knowledge enlarged, our prejudices combated, and our judgments charitably rectified.

The world is beginning to feel this. The cry of "impostor" is dying back into the past, and there is a general tendency to examine Second Sight,—the oracular crisis,—the old umbilic abstraction, *et hoc genus omine,* as phenomena produced by exaltation of the perceptive faculty.

No one can read any recent version of the history of Apollonius the Tyanean, without being struck by this modification of men's opinions. Formerly, no epithet of vituperation was hard enough for that virtuous man, whose frugal, moderate, life, and blameless manners, imposed respect upon the tyrant Domitian himself. But now, even the merest biographical dictionary gives a better version of the good Apollonius.

He is now an enthusiast, not a deceiver.

Melted into air is that curious, contradictory, feeling about him, which is partly held about Mesmerism, namely, that he was too low for contempt, yet so dangerous, that, even in 1680, Mr. Charles Blount was prevented from translating more than the two first books of his life, "by reason of the outcry raised against him of the danger which was to follow its publication." It is now perceived, that the danger apprehended, namely, of injury to the Christian religion, was but a poor compliment to Christianity, and that the allowing, not only remarkable virtues, but extraordinary powers, to Apollonius, could in no way overshadow or impair the sublimity of Christ or the uniquely divine doctrines of the Saviour of the World.

I may then, without fear of blame, and with every hope of finding numerous adherents, assert that, when Apollonius, being at Ephesus, announced as a matter of vision to those around him, the death of Domitian, it is more natural to refer this to some faculty of enlarged perception than to invent the cumbrous hypothesis that Apollonius knew beforehand of the plot to execute justice on (it cannot be called to murder) the Imperial criminal. To suppose that any one could plan a distant enterprize so perfectly, that it should happen on the very day and hour when he announced its success hundreds of miles off, seems only to substitute one marvel for another. On the other hand, observe how every word of the narrative agrees with a description of the state called "Extasis."

"All this," namely, the circumstances attending the violent death of Domitian, "happened at Rome; and all this Apollonius saw at Ephesus, as if he had been present at the transaction, which took place about mid-day in the Emperor's palace, at the time when Apollonius was walking, and disputing among the trees, planted in one of the xystas, near the town. At first, he let his voice fall, as if alarmed at something; he then went on conversing, but in a lower accent than usual, like persons whose thoughts are engaged with something different from what they are saying; at last, he became quite silent, as if he had lost the thread of his discourse. Then, fixing his eyes steadfastly on the earth, and advancing three or four steps, he cried out, 'Strike the tyrant—strike.' This he did, *not like one who guessed at what was passing from seeing its image in a mirror;*

but from literally seeing it, and, as it were, promoting it."

Another presumed proof of Apollonius's charlatanry, namely, his vision of the plague at Ephesus, may be converted into a testimony of his being a natural Clairvoyant. It is, indeed, most interesting to see how the observation of phenomena in this day can throw light upon the perplexing questions of the past. But Nature is ever true to herself; and, whether it be a Nineveh unearthed, or a Nile revisited, vindicating an Ezekiel, or bearing testimony to a Bruce, her process seems to be constant demonstration that there is more true observation, and less falsehood in the world, than scoffers are disposed to admit.

Unhealthy gases are now numbered amongst the causes which produce spectral illusions. Eliz. Okey, when in the presence of some sick persons, saw a particular phantom, which she called Jack. Dr. D——, an English physician, whom I met at Brussels, (since dead,) told me that a gentleman, with whom he was acquainted, had something of the same perception of the coming fate of any person—even though apparently in health—who should be near him at a time not long prior to dissolution.

All Brussels rang with an involuntary and speedily accomplished prophecy which he gave out (but which was never repeated to the person concerned) respecting the approaching death of a gentleman, who, at an evening party, was enjoying himself with the rest. Deducing, from these examples, that emanations from the sick or dying so affect certain individuals as to cause them, sometimes only to forebode death, at

others to invest the phantom with a bodily presence, we shall get a clue to the extraordinary, and, at first sight, almost ludicrous, assertion of Apollonius, that, when the plague was raging at Ephesus, he *saw* the malady "in the form of an old beggar-man."

The manner in which he states this (in the defence of himself intended to have been delivered before Domitian) is calm and collected, and is, moreover, accompanied by an explanation which is equally beautiful and philosophical.

After disclaiming all pretensions to the magic art, and observing that it was never once insinuated against certain prophets that "they were magicians for having foretold things which were to happen"—such as a great olive-year, or a variety of celestial phenomena—all of which might be predicted from natural causes, he goes on to propound the reasons of his own apparently supernatural groundwork.

"You will ask perhaps," he says, "how have I foreseen the extraordinary phenomenon which happened at Ephesus? You heard my accuser speak to that point. He said himself, *I did not live after the manner of other men.*" Here Apollonius alludes to his total abstinence from animal food, and from all fermented liquors, and his use of vegetable diet alone, which he declares to be more agreeable to him than "the nicest delicacies of Sybaris." Then, like a man who wishes, not to create, but to dispel, wonder, he goes on to say, "This is the kind of living, *which acts in the place of an occult cause,* and keeps my senses unimpaired, without suffering anything to overcloud them: this, in fine, is the cause of my seeing, as it were in the speculum of a mirror, what is, and is to be. A wise man will perceive

some things to be at hand, not so soon as the gods, yet sooner than the generality of men. The gods see what is to come: men what is come: and wise men what is coming. *The way in which I live is the* ONLY *thing which gives that subtilty to the senses, that energy, which is fit for producing great and wonderful effects.*"

So far Apollonius. Our own Milton has in the line—

"Spare fast that oft with gods doth diet,"

hinted at a similar effect of frugal living. Any one who has read Swedenborg's own account of himself cannot but be struck by the unconscious way in which the Swedish philosopher illustrates the same position. It was, he relates, after extraordinary fits of abstinence, that, suddenly, he fell into a sort of conscious extasis. He notes the very day and hour, when, being at the time in London, in a solitary lodging, "the Lord Himself was graciously pleased (he says) to manifest Himself to me, his unworthy servant, in a personal appearance, to open to me a sight of the spiritual world, and to enable me to converse with spirits and angels."

Now this particular kind of vision was, we may well suppose, only visionary—an example of that false mixed with true which we see in Apollonius, when he imagined he conversed with the spirit of Achilles, and which is the element that continually perplexes the real clairvoyance of somnambulists.* But, when Swedenborg whispers to Charles XII. a secret known only to the monarch, thereby causing the latter to turn pale and to accept the philosopher

* See Dr. Elliotson's remarks in *Zoist*, No. XXIV., p. 372.

as a man truly conversant with occult events; when Swedenborg announces, Apollonius-like, suddenly, in the midst of a party, that he sees his own house at Stockholm, a hundred miles off, in flames, and burning to the ground, and when the circumstance is verified by the next post,—we may justly conclude that the Swedish prophet's way of living had given *subtilty to his senses.* At least we may decide, with the writer of a recent life of Swedenborg, that "there is not the least reason to impute intended imposition to the extraordinary tissue of ingenuity and fancy, which is contended for as inspiration by the followers of Emanuel Swedenborg."*

Thus Mesmerism is shewn to be valuable as a means of enlarging our belief, and extending our charity.

But solely to *enlarge* belief were but a doubtful benefit. We seek a power which shall restrict it also, and confine it within due bounds. A river between banks fertilizes, but a limitless torrent leaves only behind it a waste of stones. So, those ultras, whose motto of belief is "*tout ou rien,*" are lost for want of form and measure. Now Mesmerism, while supplying proper width and extension, presents exactly that due degree of restriction of which we stand in need. Thus does she unite the two attributes requisite to form a true science—namely, largeness and boundary. Her largeness consists in the wide domain of man which she appropriates: her boundary consists in this,—she groups and classes her phenomena under one head; she presents her facts in connection with a reason for those facts.

Briefly. She *has* a theory.

* See *Zoist*, No. XX., pp. 349, 350.

On this subject much stuff is talked.

There is a cant of the day about Theories—a cant which our practice contradicts. All are crying out, "Give us facts—no theories!" Yet everybody really does theorize for himself. To reason—to deduce is the prerogative of man; and we, in truth, take every fact, however mysterious, in connection with a presumed cause. A visible phenomenon forces on us the conviction that there is behind it an adequate agency, even though that agency be occult. Every fact is a theory, if we did but know it. The fall of an apple includes the system of the universe. Now, in Mesmerism, every fair judge has before his eyes phenomena induced upon one human being by the action of another, while at the same time this action takes effect in such a way as to render a medium of communication between the two beings as much a thing of certainty as terrestrial magnetism is when established by the motion of a needle near a magnet. Some wise heads indeed recur mustily to the old dictum that we must not call in a new agency, when what are called (and how foolishly called!) *known* causes suffice. But, in the case of Mesmerism, these said known causes will *not* suffice. To prove this, I will relate what has just occurred at a *séance* at my house, near Lausanne, at which some gentlemen of the neighbourhood assisted, who can vouch for the truth of what I assert.

Mr. Regazzoni, a Mesmeriser from Bergamo in Italy, a gentleman of good family, but who, by the late revolutions, has been driven from his home and obliged to make his art a means of subsistence, took to my house, on the evening of Saturday, Jan. the 19th, three subjects—one a young man whom he

brought from Lyons, the two others, girls, whom Mr. Regazzoni had found at Lausanne, and who had been but a short time under his influence.

During the *séance*, Mr. Regazzoni himself mesmerised very little, because he wished to avoid all appearance of complicity with his subjects. The chief operators, on the occasion, were Mr. de Blonay, of Vernaud, and Mr. Adrien de Constant-Rebecque, of Lausanne.

The following experiments produced on all who witnessed them the most thorough conviction that there exists in Mesmerism an occult agency, independent of Suggestion.

Mr. A. de Constant placed one of the girls at a table with a book before her, out of which she was to read. She was not asleep, although she had, in the course of the evening, been frequently thrown into Sleep-waking, and was much under the influence of Mr. A. de Constant. This gentleman stood about two yards behind the chair of the girl, who had her back to us, and I was invited to stand close to Mr. A. de Constant, and to touch him gently when he was to stop the girl in her reading by his silent will. To prevent any sound or motion being perceptible, I stood a little behind Mr. de Constant, and, when I gave the signal, only put out one finger, with which I touched his coat in such a way that for the girl to be aware of what I did was utterly impossible. Five times running the girl was arrested in the midst of her reading, and quite at different intervals, by the exertion of Mr. de Constant's silent will—arrested to the second, instantaneously, suddenly, often in the middle of a word. On examination, her mouth, every time, was found pa-

ralyzed and stiff, and partly open, exactly in the position which it had assumed in order to form the syllable she was uttering at the moment she was stopped. In order to unparalyze the mouth, Mr. de Constant was obliged, each time, to make passes before it, and even to introduce his finger between the lips.

The next experiment was equally successful. The other girl, whom Mr. A. de Constant had also under his influence, was placed while in a waking state with her back to the wall. Mr. de Constant then took me aside, and asked me which part of the subject he should paralyze by his silent will? I wrote down, "La jambe gauche." He then, standing about two yards from the girl, made an effort of will, after which he told the girl to move about: upon which she moved every limb except her left leg, which had become perfectly rigid. In the same way the girl's right leg, and then one of her arms, were paralyzed. But the most curious thing was when I desired that the girl's head might become motionless. It was literally stuck to the wall by the silent will of the Mesmeriser. Her arms, her legs could move, but not her head; so that she could only walk forward as far as the attachment by her head would permit. On forcibly separating her head from the wall, it went back with a stiffness which seemed to me inimitable by voluntary muscular action.

Again: Mr. de Constant, having mesmerised the same girl, opened her eyes, which were turned up in her head, and held before them four articles, one of which was a small bottle or flacon. These things the subject saw and named. I was then to decide

which of the four articles the Mesmeriser should by silent will impress on the girl's memory. I wrote down "flacon." Mr. de Constant then awoke the girl by passes, and asked her if she remembered having seen anything? She answered directly, "Oui—un flacon." Being asked, "Did you see anything else?" she replied in the negative.

Again: the young man was thrown into sleep-waking, and four handkerchiefs—all of them white and very similar (one had been previously rejected because it had some scent on it)—were placed on a table. Mr. Regazzoni then asked us which of the handkerchiefs we would fix on to become, by mesmerisation, heavy to the feeling of the somnambulist? The most sceptical of the party chose the particular handkerchief (to be recognized afterwards by the mark) which he himself was permitted, after it had been mesmerised, to shuffle up amongst the others. The young man was then told to take up the handkerchiefs one by one. That which was to be heavy came (I think) the third. The previous ones had no effect upon him, but, when he took up the right one, he let it drop directly as if incapable of holding it.*

Another remarkable thing, which spontaneously presented itself, was this. I had mesmerised one of the girls, and was flirting my fingers in her face (she had her eyes firmly shut), according to a well-

* This last experiment seems to have been mixed up with *Suggestion* (as to the heaviness of the handkerchief) conveyed by silent Will. The mesmerisation of the handkerchief left an *influence* behind. The subject did not smell to it, but dropped it directly he took it. Mr. G——, who did not see the other most successful experiments, cried out on witnessing this, "Perfect! It is the best thing I have seen!"

known mesmerising movement, when it came into Mr. de Constant's head to ask the girl if she saw anything? "Yes," she said, "a red light." This answer struck us, and put us on the track of further experiment. Mr. de Blonay also flirted his fingers in the girl's face. "What do you see?" was again asked. "Blanc comme le soleil," was the reply. Another was pronounced to give out a blue light, and finally the most sceptical of our party was told, *à propos* of his fingers, moved in the same way, "Je ne vois rien du tout." The curious part of the affair was this. The experiment being repeated in another room upon the young man, who was thrown into sleep-waking, he gave exactly the same answers for the same people, and still, as regarded the least believing of the party, nothing was seen at all. In both cases the eyes were, so to speak, sealed down, and, when I with difficulty pulled the lids apart, the pupil was scarcely to be seen from its being so turned up into the head as to leave almost only the whites of the eyes visible.

At another time, in the apartment of Mr. Regazzoni, I saw a different girl take up a pair of gloves, which I had fixed upon and silently written down for the experiment, by the mere will of Mr. Regazzoni. The following also struck me, as being an unconcerted experiment. (Such are always the most worth.)

Mr. Regazzoni wished to shew that, if any person present were imbued with his mesmeric influence, the young man, Victor, his somnambulist, would, on touching that person, become mesmerised. Accordingly, Victor was sent out of the room, and I heard him go far down the passage. Then, a gen-

tleman, an acquaintance of mine, who had come with me, allowed Mr. Regazzoni to make many passes about him, he standing up all the time amidst a group of spectators. Mr. Regazzoni then begged my friend to remain where he was, and called in Victor, who was heard coming down the passage from a distance. But Mr. G——, the imbued gentleman, forgot the injunction to remain still, and moved away considerably from the spot where he had been standing. Just as we were all regretting that Mr. G—— had moved from the charmed spot, and lamenting that one of the conditions of the experiment had been violated, in came Victor. He was told to go up and touch the different persons of the company. This he was about to do, when he crossed over the spot where Mr. G—— had been standing. In one instant he fell, as if shot, and with frightful violence, to the floor. An influence had been plainly left upon the place that took effect, unexpectedly to all, and even to the Mesmeriser himself. Then, too, something occurred peculiarly interesting to myself. Victor, on the floor, assumed exactly the same position which I had seen the young man Salmon, one of Dr. Elliotson's patients, take when lying on the floor under mesmeric influence.* The arms and legs were raised so rigidly and completely as to leave the body scarcely touching the ground. The position is a painful one, and physically impossible to be maintained, under normal circumstances, for the same length of time during which these sleep-wakers kept it up. Such coincident phenomena happening at different times, and in different places, and exhibited severally by

* The case is described in *The Zoist*, No. XXXIV.

persons who never knew one another, are most interesting. Victor never stirred from his extraordinary basket-like attitude till Mr. Regazzoni demesmerised him, at a distance, and by silent will.

Since the above were detailed, I have acquired, through Mr. Regazzoni, new proofs of the Mesmeric influence, previously to detailing which I desire to say a few words about the Mesmeriser. At the close of a series of lectures on Mesmerism, which were attended by the principal gentry of Lausanne, the impression of the good faith and sincerity of Mr. Regazzoni is very general. There has been some opposition on the part of certain of the medical men of the place: but three of the faculty have declared themselves decided converts. I should also observe that Mr. Regazzoni came to Lausanne provided with certificates from the medical bodies of Toulouse and Montpellier; the latter of which, after keeping the Mesmeriser before them, for six hours, declared that Mesmerism, as shewn them by Mr. Regazzoni, presented the characteristics of a real science. The chief fact that converted the medical academies was the influence of Mesmerism upon the heart and upon the circulation of the blood. Mr. Regazzoni has shewn the same phenomena to us here. I have felt the pulse of a subject encreased or diminished by mesmeric passes. A gentleman, who thought that by mere force of will, and tension of the muscles, he could produce similar effects (without Mesmerism) on himself, failed entirely in the effort. Other physical phenomena were shewn by Mr. Regazzoni, interesting in the highest degree, but hardly fitted for a work like this. Altogether the visit of Mr. Regazzoni to Lausanne has been productive of remark-

able results. Many persons, who had either disbelieved Mesmerism or had not thought about it, now declare that they consider the subject full of truth and interest.

It speaks well for the candour of some persons with whom I have conversed about the matter, that certain failures which occurred in public have confirmed their faith—if not in Mesmerism—in the Mesmeriser. A gentleman, the other day, remarked to me very sensibly that an impostor could easily arrange with his accomplices so that certain experiments should never fail. We know that the Mysterious Lady, who has avowedly a system of signs with her husband, never fails. I feel sure that I could myself, by a previous mutual understanding, make an accomplice do strange things, which would take place with certainty. But then they would not be Mesmeric things, which, from the variable sensibility of subjects, do *not* occur with certainty. Yet, forsooth, there is a prejudice against persons who make Mesmerism a means of subsistence. This prejudice seems to me on a par with the rest of the treatment set apart for Mesmerism. In no other case is the professor of an art run down because he lives by his art. The greatest chemist does not give his lectures gratis. He has (and justly) not only to be paid for his time, but to be reimbursed for the outlay which he himself has to make for hire of rooms, lights, and other appurtenances of public lecturing. Every man who has his estate in his head or hands lives by turning to account the powers and faculties which God has given him. Why then is the Mesmeriser who lives by Mesmerism to be scouted as an impostor?

The same remarks may not perhaps exactly apply to the subjects whom the Mesmeriser hires. Yet even as to them, is it not unjust to brand them with an *à priori* condemnation? Persons like Madlle. Prudence, or Alexis Didier, are rarely endowed, and, if poor, seem to be justified in supporting themselves, while at the same time they aid the Mesmeriser, who would, as gladly as Mr. Lumley ever secured a celebrated cantatrice, engage the services of such mesmeric stars.

With this prelude I introduce some farther phenomena operated by Mr. Regazzoni.

On the 27th of January, 1854, at one o'clock, Mr. Regazzoni brought to my house three of his subjects. One is a Spaniard who is called Thomas; the second a native of Lyons, named Victor; the third a girl called Louise. The two first came to Lausanne with Mr. Regazzoni; the last is a native of the place, who has only been for a short time under the Mesmeriser's influence.

Three gentlemen of the neighbourhood kindly consented to be present during the experiments. These were, Sir Charles Style, Bart.; Mr. W. W. F. de Cerjat of Elysée; and Mr. de Blonay of Vernaud.

I pass over sundry experiments which were of a medical kind, and some unimportant trials which were generally failures, and did not establish a peculiar agency in the eyes of any but the initiated. I proceed at once to the really important business of the day.

Mr. Regazzoni, at my request, with the express design of demonstrating Mesmeric influence operating at a distance, was to try (but without answering for the success of his experiment,) to throw down his

three subjects (unwarned) while walking in the garden.

The experiment was thus conducted. The three subjects, not asleep, were sent out to walk in the garden which is in front of my house. They knew that they were to be acted upon, but not when. Mr. Regazzoni was shut up in a small room with one of the gentlemen of the jury. The other two gentlemen, with myself, stood outside the small room on a covered verandah which commands a view of the garden. A door, the upper part of which is of glass, gives access from the small room to the verandah. The first time of trying the experiment, Mr. W. W. F. de Cerjat was, by agreement, shut up with Mr. Regazzoni. As everybody must naturally view experiments from his own stand-point, I will just narrate what I saw. It is not my business to answer the objections of other people, or to point out how impossible it is to find fault with the correctness of our experiments. I leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

I saw the three subjects walking, hand-in-hand, down the gravel walk which is at right angles to the house. They then turned into a walk parallel with the house, nearly to the end of which they proceeded. Then, suddenly, they all tumbled down one upon another as if they had been shot, and with such violence that the gravel is even yet ploughed up with the concussion, as if wild animals had been struggling there. The attitudes of the fallen group were very extraordinary. Legs and arms were rigidly held aloft, without any perceptible motion.

The moment I saw the subjects fall, I opened the glass door of the little room, and saw Mr. Re-

gazzoni standing in a bent position with his arm forcibly stretched out. I asked, "Has the thing succeeded?" Mr. de Cerjat replied, "Yes, after the third pass."

This gentleman subsequently told me that, when the party had left him alone with the Mesmeriser, he carefully drew the thick figured muslin blind over the glass part of the door. He then placed himself and Mr. Regazzoni where they could both best see the subjects in the garden, without the possibility of being seen by them. It was Mr. de Cerjat who gave the signal for Mr. Regazzoni to act upon the subjects, which he did (he tells me) by a mere touch with his stick on Mr. Regazzoni's leg, just as the Mesmeric trio in the garden were disappearing behind a bush, and had their backs nearly turned to the little room. The first and second passes did not succeed. At the third (the three passes were all made in quick succession,) when Mr. Regazzoni seemed to task all his energies, the subjects all fell down, as related. It was at this moment I opened the door and found Mr. Regazzoni with his arm still stretched out. Then Mr. de Cerjat and Mr. Regazzoni came out on the balcony, and the latter called out to his subjects, who remained just as they had fallen with their limbs in the air, "Pensez à moi!" He then made some inspirations, as if drawing in his breath with effort. Then appeared a quivering in the raised and stiffened limbs of the subjects. And so, by degrees, they relapsed from their rigidity, and at last got up in a waking state.

Sir Charles Style observed, that the whole thing was most curious and remarkable, but that he should like to see the experiment repeated. To this we all

agreed. This time Mr. de Blonay was shut up with the Mesmeriser. Sir Charles Style descended to the garden, to lead the subjects about according to his wish. The others remained on the balcony. I now saw Sir Charles Style go to the subjects, who held hands as before, and, after speaking to them, precede them over the grass amongst some flower beds. I cried out, "I don't want them to tumble on my beds;" upon which, Sir Charles led the group nearer the house to a point where I have since ascertained it is scarcely possible for a person in the little room to see any one walking. At this point, I saw the subjects all tumble down suddenly and simultaneously as before, scratching up the gravel, and presenting limbs, at first convulsed, but afterwards rigid. I instantly opened the little door, and found Mr. Regazzoni again in the same attitude in which I found him the first time. I must observe that neither time he was very near the door. On inquiring from Mr. de Blonay how the thing had gone, I found that this time *one* pass—after the signal which Mr. de Blonay had himself given—had been sufficient to strike down the subjects. Between the signal given, the falling of the somnambulists, and my opening the door, only three or four seconds had passed.

I must observe that, after the experiments were at an end, I went into the garden, and placed one of my servants in the little room nearer the door, of which the upper part is of glass, than M . Regazzoni had stood. I told my servant to gesticulate when he saw me in the gravel walk. But, even when the blind was *not* drawn, I could see nothing of my servant on account of the absence of light behind. The window looked like a blank. Besides this, the pro-

jecting verandah (a gallery in the swiss fashion) hid the window a good deal. Moreover, in the position in which the subjects were (both times) when they fell, it was impossible even by a side view to see the window at all, without turning the head or standing on tiptoe; nothing of which was done by the somnambulists.

After the two experiments, we joined Sir Charles Style in the garden, and proceeded to try some curious experiments regarding attraction, by tying up with girdles and cords the girl Louise to the branch of a tree. She was attached by the legs and waist in a painful position, which looked like a piece of Indian torture. However, Louise, thrown into sleep-waking, said she was perfectly comfortable. Mr. Regazzoni then (while her eyes were bandaged) attracted various parts of her body. Under these experiments the girl displayed postures which seemed all but impossible for any one to execute in her position. She became, at will, a convex or a concave arch, and seemed drawn about as if in spasms of tetanus.

The young man, Victor, was then tried, and manifested the same phenomena. At first his head hung down so as nearly to touch the ground, but passes soon brought it up. Then, at my suggestion, Victor was hung up perpendicularly, with the straps under his arms—his feet about a foot from the ground. I wished to see if Mesmeric attraction could make him move all in one piece. This was not accomplished; but his head came forward, and his feet went slightly back, so that he remained somewhat in the position of the figure-head of a ship. The position was reversed by attracting the

feet. Victor's arms seemed almost pulled out of their sockets, and he looked as if he were under the tender mercies of the Inquisition of old. Yet he declared himself perfectly comfortable.

After this, we had Louise awaked, and released from a strange position, into which she had seemed enchanted, while standing near the tree, with her head on one side, and her whole body quite rigid. Mr. Regazzoni then offered any of us to throw Louise down from behind by a pass, as she was walking, awake, along the gravel-walk. I however suggested that Mr. Regazzoni had better make the pass at the will of some one present, because of his *rapport* with the Somnambule. The experiment succeeded; but, as Sir Charles Style was anxious to see the thing repeated by silent will, and not by Mr. Regazzoni, I, who had mesmerised Louise, and knew myself to be in *rapport* with her, offered to make the trial.

Louise walked some way along the gravel-walk, (I could not persuade her to go upon the soft grass, because she feared to spoil her gown,) and Sir Charles just gave me a touch, on which I exerted my silent will, when Louise went down in a beautiful position (that of the dying gladiator), which might have served as the model to a sculptor. She, however, fell with such violence as to cut her hand considerably on the gravel. Yet there she remained, motionless, till I released her by the "*Pensez-à-moi*," which is Mr. Regazzoni's method, and by which he professes to recall to himself the Mesmeric fluid which he has given out. (For the idea which this theory involves I am not responsible.)

Our party now separated; Sir Charles Style say-

ing, as he went away, "We have certainly witnessed experiments that ought to convince the most incredulous." Sir Charles Style also made a valuable remark, which, I own, did not occur to me. He said, "That the subjects should have fallen at all *after* the signal had been given, is much in favour of the genuineness of the experiments. For it is evident that they, had they gone by fancy, might have fallen *before* the signal was given, which would have altogether nullified the idea of Mesmeric agency in this particular case."

I subjoin the signatures of the gentlemen present at the above experiments.

"I beg to add my testimony to the correctness of the above statement as far as regards the experiment of causing the subjects to fall in the garden, and also of the extraordinary and totally unnatural position into which Victor was thrown, and in which he remained for a considerable time. I was not present at some of the other experiments.*

"William W. F. de Cerjat."

"I beg to bear testimony to the accuracy of Mr. Townshend's statement, having been present during all the experiments.

"Charles Style."

"I can vouch for the accuracy of the above statement.

"G. de Blonay."

* Mr. de Cerjat was forced to leave us by business before we tried some of the experiments of *attraction* which the other gentlemen, who staid the *whole* time, witnessed.

I now present to my reader a case which has been kindly drawn up for me by Mr. Adrien de Constant-Rebecque. The name of the young man, mentioned in the account, who is of a noble family in Lausanne, is not, for obvious reasons, given. I translate the attestation of Mr. de Constant.

"On the 26th of January, I assisted, at the desire of Mr. Hare Townshend, at a mesmerisation which Mr. Regazzoni performed on a young man, aged 20, who is suffering under violent palpitations of the heart, which medical men say are the result of an aneurism of that organ.

"When first the patient came into the room, and before the mesmerisation, his heart was beating so violently as to be heard at some distance off, and, when a hand was laid over it, the pulsations were felt to be both hard and quick. I ascertained carefully this to be the case: then I took my watch in hand, and Mr. Regazzoni began to mesmerise by putting himself *en rapport* with the patient—a process which lasted three minutes. Then, he laid one hand over the patient's heart, and made rather strong passes with the other. After this, he employed both hands to mesmerise downwards from the heart to the epigastrium, frequently throwing off, and conducting away, the fluid when it seemed to be too powerful. Finally, he made some warm suffla-tions immediately over the region of the heart, and again placed his hands there.

"After these operations, which lasted in all eight minutes, I again felt the heart, the palpitation of which had now diminished to such a degree that I could not even discover the usual action of the heart —a fact to which, accustomed as he was to such

violent palpitations, the very deportment of the patient bore witness, and at which he expressed his astonishment.

"When the young man was examined again at the end of some minutes, the heart had begun again to palpitate, but more calmly and naturally than before the mesmerisation.

"A second experiment made by myself, in the character of a pupil of Mr. Regazzoni, produced identically the same results, and the apparent suppression of all beating of the heart, during some time.

"Having then caused the patient to walk quickly about the room for some minutes, I found that the palpitations somewhat returned, but they were less violent than at first; and when I made the patient sit quietly down for some minutes, without mesmerising him, the beating of the heart again diminished, but not in the same degree as under mesmerisation.

"As the young man in question has only just begun to try Mesmerism, it is only possible, at the present moment, to verify the immediate effects of the influence upon the violent palpitations of the heart, without forming a judgment as to the effects that may be hereafter obtained with respect to the malady itself.

"These facts were thus observed by me at Lausanne, the 26th of January, 1854.

"(Signed) ADRIEN DE CONSTANT."

The above facts, and many others known to every experimental Mesmerist, prove the existence of that very power which is the *bête noire* of our antagonists.

For truth's sake, for convenience sake, we refer our facts to a single head. The evil of this? Nay, but the evil lies on the other side. Had certain "recent events" been referred to one great cause, we should never have heard of such folly as is indicated by the very term "Spirit-rapping;" nor would Professor Faraday have fallen below his reputation by writing an insufficient explanation of table-turning, and inventing a child's toy which proves nothing to the point. References to wrong causes, or to inadequate causes, do harm, because nobody believes them; and about things so explained nobody knows what to believe. Whence either hard-headed, hard-hearted scepticism, or wild, injurious superstition.

In what grand relief to these errors by excess, or by defect—the over-great, or the superbly little—stands out Mesmer's thesis, that "a communication between every object in creation is maintained by a subtle fluid diffused through the universe!" and his still further induction, that this fluid is "the medium of sensation;" can be wielded by the mind of man, can be "accumulated, concentrated, passed onwards:" that it is "reflected from certain surfaces, as light is;" and again, his philosophic limitation, that "although the fluid is universal, it does not assimilate with all bodies in an equal degree."

The scientific world finds it convenient to smile at this, because the discovery comes not from itself. Otherwise justice must have long since been done to a noble generalization.

You call Mesmer's Theory mere assumption?

Why?

I maintain that it fulfils all those requirements of

legitimate Theory, that, when fulfilled, distinguish Theory from Hypothesis.

Now the conditions of a Theory are allowedly these:—

First—That the Theory should start from known points or principles.

Second—That those principles should be known to produce effects which shall be in harmony with the new effects which they are called upon to account for.

Third—That the Theory should correspond, if not with all the facts to be explained, at least with so great a majority of them as to render it highly probable that means will in time be found of grouping all the phenomena beneath it.*

Let us consider these requirements *separatim et seriatim.*

And first, of the first.

"That the Theory should start from known points or principles."

Ours does.

In spite of all the evasive jargon of our opponents, there *is* a nervous force: there *are* pervading media.

And first, of the Nervous Force—which, not only from its vital properties and near connexion with life, but, also, in compliment to that admirably named and admirably conducted periodical, *The Zoist*, I propose to call Zoogen.

That a nervous power exists, is manifest on the slightest consideration. Who that knows anything can ascribe power to the nerves themselves? Every one is aware that they are but a feeble network,

* See Second Dissertation in the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

and yet convey strength to the muscles; for, cut the nerve, and the force of the muscle, with which it communicates, is gone. This fact, unless we take up with the notion that "the weaker the tissue, the greater is its inherent strength," proves that nervous dynamics are quite another thing to the substance in which they reside.

In vain do medical men now try to get out of the scrape into which they once brought themselves by allowing that the brain dispenses force to the nerves: in vain do they resort to the quibble that to call this force electric is presumably incorrect. The nerves remain the same soft pappy filaments they ever were, yet we move our arms and legs not the less by them ("weak masters though they be"); manifestly effecting such an apparent paradox through the addition of some force which is not in themselves.

They are evidently conductors to *something*.

And this *something*, the will, acting by the brain, can dispense in large or small quantities, and (as is shewn by feats of strength under excitement) can accumulate and retain to the point of a marvellous and long-enduring tension and knotting-up of a muscle.

Moreover, the experiments of Phillips and others (though it is now found convenient by some persons to pass such things over *sub silentio)* have proved that *a* force can be made to do the duty of a nerve when that nerve is removed, and can act alone. The cruel yet interesting facts relating to the severance of the stomach-nerves of living rabbits, after which digestion was carried on by electricity, amply demonstrate this. It is true that this experiment does not *prove* Zoogen and Electricity to be the same,

because like effects do *not* always spring from identical causes; yet that Electricity should, even when it has no nerve to conduct it, do the work of Zoogen, is an immense presumptive proof of relationship between the two dynamical yet imponderable agents. But the wary ones, who have their own little plan, say that a nervous force is all an assumption. To hear the creatures talk, one would imagine that there was nothing to shew—nothing to be argued, for the existence of any nervous agent whatever. All the mysteries of motion are to be accomplished by these "grey, or whitish non-elastic cords, called nerves, which, without moving, give mobility to the muscles, and convey feeling to the organs of sensation."* Thus they, who profess to hate miracle, throw man into the dilemma of operating a constant miracle. He moves his arm, forsooth, by that which has no power in itself. *Ex absurdo,* we prove a nervous power.

The nerves serve as conductors to Zoogen, in the same way, probably, that iron wire does to Electricity, namely, by the superficies. Many clamorous words have been wasted in shewing that the nerves are not tubes, and that therefore no fluid can properly be said to *circulate* in them. This is saying nothing. Sap is a fluid, which is known to ascend and descend in plants; yet, the cellular tissue is so constructed, that no plant can be said to have a true circulation. Each cell in a plant is detached, and closed by a membrane, which, when viewed under the highest power of the microscope, appears to possess a perfectly homogeneous texture, without pores

* Phillips.

of any kind. Yet fluids, placed under certain circumstances, are capable of passing through it with considerable facility; and the sap actually *does* flow from the root of the plant upward with immense violence. Again, in the human subject, no actual connection of arteries and veins, at the extremities of one, and the commencement of the other, can be *seen*, even with the best microscopes. Yet, who doubts the circulation of the blood?

These mysteries of *living* matter ought to make us humbly careful how we apply *mechanical* rules in any case where vital action is concerned. Besides, with regard to the Nervous Power, it is evident that there may be no question of a *fluid*, or of the *circulation* of a fluid, but that this does not impeach the existence of a *force*, which is probably *conducted* by the surfaces of the nerves, yet may be otherwise conducted. The substance, both of brain and nerves, is *sui generis*, and therefore, the mode of conduction by them may be also *sui generis*. Only, we have a right to insist upon a Nervous Power. The reasoning is very simple. There is the strong will, and the strong muscle; (the one spiritually,—dynamically, the other materially, strong;) and between these two is the weak nerve. In order to connect the two strengths, we must allow the original strength to pass along the weak connecting line, which otherwise would be a line of *dis*-union. Providence, indeed, as if to lead our reflections to the true source of power and motion, namely, *Thought*, has given the strongest dynamics to the weakest substances. By the brain, which is but albumen and white fatty matter, into which, water and earths enter, we *think*; by the nerves, which a few consist chiefly of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, we *feel*.

Our strength is not of brass or iron. An oak tree does not think, or walk, yet it is made of sterner stuff than man, who, the more he has of that feeble substance called brain, *thinks* the more. Such facts ought to lead the mind away from visible matter as the source of power, and conduct us to the real dynamics of things. By this road we might easily reach our universal agent, or Zoogen, which I am inclined to place next to Thought in the economy of nature.

Many curious experiments detailed by Darwin, and more recently by Bell, go to prove that this nervous power acts mediately, not immediately; that an interval, however generally unappreciable, intervenes between the mind's order to a muscle, and the execution of that order by the muscle; or, conversely, between an impression, *ab extrà*, on an organ of sense, and the transmission of that impression to the *sensorium*. The mind, then, dictates, orders, or receives impressions, only by the instrumentality of a medium. Now, the next not illogical or uncalled for step in our reasoning is the question, whether a force so great as that which we dispense from the brain can possibly die in itself; whether it must not necessarily be propagated beyond the organ that it uses or the limb which it causes to move? All analogy cries loudly, that no motion can possibly destroy itself or become annihilated.

I heard an intelligent doubter as to Mesmerism allow several recondite laws of nature, that, if carried out into deductions, would establish the Mesmerist's great position. He allowed that a man could not move his arm but by sending to it a nervous force from the brain: he allowed that, philosophically speaking, the merest action of an arm

must impress on the media of Creation a wave of motion that could only become extinct in space, and must impress itself on eternity. We want but this. Let it but be allowed that the brain moves in thought, and what is to forbid the circling eddies of that motion to reach and influence another brain? Nor are there wanting external Media to send on the impulse which proceeds *ab intrà*.

There are, indeed, several pervading media in nature, which pass through solids, and to which opaque substances are no bar. How truly electricity is an element in Nature, every day's accession to science demonstrates. How universally diffused is some sort of resisting medium, cometary phenomena shew beyond dispute. Heat, moreover, appears to be ubiquitous; for what substance is without its concealed caloric? And communication through media is the law of Nature. The words of my interlocutor are borne to me upon the air, I receive intimations of his thoughts by letter through the intervention of quite another medium, namely, the light: and why am I to be stopped here, and not allowed to suppose that the mind itself, from which both spoken and written thought emanates, has its Zoogen, its peculiar atmosphere, or ocean of sensibility, whereby its every action is made more vital and efficacious? That such a medium exists, Analogy, even on *à priori* reasoning, renders probable: but, when we come to a certain peculiar class of facts, the thing is certain.

Mesmerism is precisely the link which connects the nervous power and the surrounding media, in a visible and incontestable manner, shewing by overt facts that man influences man *from a distance*, though under very restricted laws and peculiar con-

ditions. This I venture to call a *known* basis for a Theory. For what means the expression of a *known* basis? Nothing else but that it is known to the experimenters on the subject—known to those who examine it. That the word *known* is ever thus restricted is evident: for nine-tenths of mankind take galvanism, or any other experimental science, for granted, only on the word of the one-tenth of mankind who have practised galvanic or other experiments.

And I have yet to learn, why our testimony, because peculiar, is to be rejected. In every case, a peculiar agent requires to be proved by a peculiar class of facts. Every substance has its own tests; and the tests which demonstrate the existence of one thing do not demonstrate the existence of another thing.

Now, as to a nervous power, there is absolute propriety in making nervous sensibility the test of it. Zoogen must be ascertained by vital tact, by living appreciation. If the only test we had for the existence of a nervous agent were the perception of Sensitives, we ought, after a certain amount of evidence and congruity of assertion, to consider the thing as demonstrated. A moment's reflection will make any candid person acknowledge that this ought to be, simply because it is so in other matters of sensation. With regard to the existence of many facts, we call in fineness of the senses as a test. Indeed, we use it constantly to demonstrate to us things of which we ourselves have no perception. The fairy tale of the Princess, who had in her retinue certain gifted persons, whose senses were preternaturally acute—Fine-ear, who could hear the grass grow—Lynx-eye,

who could see the same fact, &c., and who made use of these faithful servitors in moments of emergency, is but the shadowing forth of a great truth. Why do we use hounds in hunting, greyhounds in coursing, but for the perfection of their respective powers? The sense of smell in the dog is the only proof we have for the existence of what we call *scent*—that curious emanation, which has its laws, and is encreased or diminished, or lost or found, according to certain conditions of the earth and atmosphere. I am myself rather too accurate of smell. Certain odours are painful to me, and I perceive them when nobody else does. I can from my distant kitchen, quite at the other end of the house, catch certain emanations. I say, "There is such a thing." Others in the room say, "We cannot perceive it;" but I am always right. I have accused ladies of using certain scents which I dislike. They have denied the impeachment. Nobody else has borne me out. Yet, on examination, a glove or a handkerchief was found to have been once, a very long time ago, in a drawer with patchouli or powder of Heliotrope. *A propos* of the same subject, a hairdresser once told me a curious fact relative to his profession. A bag of hair which had come over from Germany had been stolen from him. He recognized it in a court of law by the mere smell of the hair, and selected it from amongst many other bags which the thief had stolen. His apprentice, when the precisely similar bags had been shuffled up again, selected the same bag by the smell. And this testimony of ownership was allowed.

With regard to acuteness of vision. Captains of vessels send up some well-known seaman to the mast-head to look out for a distant sail, which he

sees, with his naked eye, better than others of the crew by the aid of glasses; and, when Jack comes down from the crow's nest, and says—"Sir, I spy a sail ten knots off," the Captain never dreams of doubting his envoy—does not call Jack a liar, but makes use of the information conveyed to him by the honest tar. And why? Because the captain *wants* the in-information. The opponents of Mesmerism do not believe our Sensitives for the exactly converse reason, they do *not* want the information. Again, as to sounds. Do we dream of doubting the testimony of musicians as to instruments being good, in tune, &c.? Do we, to test a piano, call in some Jack-pudding to pronounce on tones, for which Nature

"Although she gave him two—gave him no ear?"

In the matter of sapors, would the gastronomer yield the palm of delicate perception to some country chaw-bacon?

In the matter of touch, would the lady or gentleman, conversant with certain substances, bear to have doubt cast upon their judgment of real India silks, or admirable first-rate broad-cloth? or the coat of a thorough-bred Arabian charger? The touch of the blind—the wing of the bat—are allowed as tests, so delicate in their nature, so appreciative of existences, as almost to have caused the conclusion that there is a sixth sense.

On the testimony, then, of Sensitives, whose powers we make use of, as men do in any other matter, we assert, *de jure*, that there *is* an imponderable agent which they see, and feel, and judge by—sometimes with regard even to distant objects.

Besides this testimony, I call in all that I have

related of Influence from a distance, when the subject of that Influence was unconscious that it would be exercised. All these things have been long known to Mesmerists, and might be known to all the world, if they would properly try the evidence.

Thus are all our grounds of belief cognizable—though not always grossly visible. Our agent is known in its effects, which is as much as can be said for any other dynamical agent. And vital effects are as real as any other effects. If we be allowed to avail ourselves of the common rules of proof, we may assert positively that there *is* a Mesmeric Medium; and, from facts, infer this Medium to be identical with, or in close connection with, the nervous force: whence with propriety it may be called Zoogen. Is such a reasonable piece of induction to be called a gratuitous assumption? Even if an assumption, it need not necessarily be gratuitous. The case may require it. To make any mass of facts, which seem to have relation to each other, cohere and be consistent, we always assume a cause. With reverence I speak it; but, although God is the basis of everything, we only assume the existence of God. We assume it, in order to account for that which cannot otherwise be accounted for; and, a Deity once allowed, everything becomes beautiful and harmonious. Indeed, *all* great generalizations are assumptions. Newton's Attraction is but an assumed name for certain facts, a convenient head whereto to refer certain phenomena. But, in reality, even with regard to this masterpiece of generalization, we might view the matter otherwise. We might, instead of placing the phenomena to the account of the attraction which bodies have to each other, transfer the onus to the repulsion of the

resisting media wherein bodies move. But, then, the doctrine of Attraction is found to be the most convenient form for expressing the phenomena.

Just so with the nervous Medium, which I have called Zoogen. We find it most convenient to refer to this the facts which force us to infer both its external existence as the great sentient atmosphere of nature, and its internal existence as modified by human appropriation. If, then, Newton's Attraction be a Theory, the Mesmeric Medium is also a Theory. It is an inference resting on known bases : and thus the first requisite of Theory is, in it, fulfilled.

Equally well does our agent meet the second great requirement of Theory.

The principles on which it rests are known to produce effects similar to those which they are now called upon to account for.

The nervous Medium is the great agent of Thought, of Motion (which Locke allows can only spring from Thought), and of Sensation. In life considered apart from Mesmerism, (though it is difficult so to consider it,) any interruption to, or accumulation of, the nervous Power, is attended with extraordinary results of Thought, Motion, and Sensation. Sometimes there is Paralysis and deadening; at other times, a marvellous increase of strength, of sensibility, of faculty. A Lady has only lately told me of a son whom she lost at an early age, who had, in his last fatal illness, an almost miraculous development of the musical faculty. The worse he grew, the more extraordinary became his powers of execution, and of musical memory. Both on the violin, and on the piano-forte, he would perform the longest and most difficult pieces after having heard them but once; and this

with no great previous knowledge of music. And this excitation of the musical organ continued till the day of his death. But I need not multiply instances of this sort of development of faculty. *Abercrombie on the Mental Powers* is full of cases of the kind.

Neither is it necessary for me to insist upon the strength which the brain (sometimes likened to a Galvanic pile) can, under excitement, dispense to muscles, (or more properly, to the nerves,) which have seemed previously to be in a state of paralysis. Every one, also, who has cast a cursory view over books on the wonders of our being, knows how the senses can be exalted by what is loosely called *disease,* but which is, in stricter philosophy, a want of equilibrium in the nervous system—and how sensitive persons have heard what has been said where hearing seemed impossible—how they have detected the secret presence of repugnant substances, &c.

In direct accordance with the above allowed facts are the phenomena wrought by Mesmerism.

Allowing that we fall into absurdities unless we concede the existence of a nervous dynamical agent, we must also allow that we should, *à priori,* expect the nervous agent to strengthen perception, to produce phenomena of motion, to exalt the sensibility. Tug at our web which way you will, you will find it equally strong on all sides. Our agent is unexceptionable: the effects which flow from it are in accordance with other known effects, and are just such as would be predicated of it.

In the last place, we find no difficulty in shewing that the Mesmeric Theory corresponds with the majority of the facts to be explained.

I was about to say, with *all* the facts to be explained. But caution is best. Our Science is not, indeed, in its infancy; yet, (for so great a science,) has not attained, perhaps, even the patriarchal measure of youth-hood. We must remember that Jacob entered not into matrimony till the ripe age of eighty. We will, then, more safely suppose that we have not yet brought *every* fact relative to Motion and Sensation beneath our banner. But, then, let us remember that, only on the ground of corresponding with the *majority* of the facts, "Newton's system claimed the title of Theory, during that long period when it was unable to explain many celestial appearances till La Place adapted to it all the phenomena. A Theory may be just before it is complete."*

Even with these limitations, Mesmerism will strike every unprejudiced person as corresponding with the facts to be explained, in a large and satisfactory manner. Internal Zoogen, encreased by a supply, *ab extrà*, is just calculated to comprise the wonders exhibited by the Mesmeric subject; while, on the other hand, external Zoogen, wielded by human agency, embraces that class of facts which result from power undeniably exercised by one person over another. The Mesmeric Medium is, indeed, the fitting and necessary precedent, as well as accompaniment, to any of those excitations of Suggestion, or Imagination, that our opponents attempt to raise into the cause itself. This much is evident. Even should we allow that the mental telescope be turned by Suggestion in a certain direction, it may, nevertheless, be demonstrated that the Mesmeriser beholds through it what never was suggested.

* See the "Second Dissertation" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

To "follow the lead," (one of the expressions by which *the Quarterly Review* tries to throw scorn on Mesmerism,) does not account for a Somnambulist giving a particular account of some one particular object in my apartment where he has never been. Even if I have said to him in the beginning, "I have pictures," I cannot possibly, by this piece of suggestion, make him describe to me some one particular picture of mine — so peculiar that I cannot mistake its individuality—with every detail and minute circumstance concerning it. Yet, this Alexis did (as I have related in *The Zoist*, No. XXXVI.) when I mesmerised him at Paris.

But the case was stronger than I have put it. Alexis did not know my name even. I never told him that I had any pictures. I merely said, "Can you see my house?" on which he asked, "Which? for you have two." I then said, "Where are they?" Upon which he entered into a perfectly true description of the situation and appearance of both; and finished by describing minutely a singular picture which I have on black marble at Lausanne—the black marble being particularly mentioned.

Now for the above fact, (and it is only one of many,) I am naturally forced to supply myself with an explanation: and this I find in the existence only, throughout the universe, of such an infinite network of sentient lines (not invisible to our eyes) as that which, visibly, will soon connect thought and motion all over the civilized world. In short, shew the wire, and electric communication ceases to be a wonder.

How much farther and more extensively our Theory corresponds with our Facts, I leave to the candid reader to examine for himself: just remarking that

we possess, in unity and neatness, if in nothing else, an immense advantage over our adversaries.

"The rules of philosophizing" (says Mackintosh) "require that causes should not be multiplied without necessity." Of two explanations, therefore, which profess to account for the same appearances, (even *cæteris paribus*, which is by no means here the case,) "that Theory is manifestly to be preferred, which supposes the smallest number of ultimate and inexplicable principles." Let the truth of this observation be granted, and we may then observe in what beautiful contrast, with its one simple agency, our Theory stands to the multiplied suppositions and immense apparatus of the Suggestive Philosophy.

But not here even end the benefits of the Mesmeric Theory. Not only does it embrace the majority of facts which palpably come under the head of Mesmerism, but of those which are not yet called by the name of Mesmerism, merely because they either exist naturally instead of being induced artificially, or are induced by other than the Mesmeric methods.

There is a quantity of natural, unacknowledged, Mesmerism in the world. There is much going on, at the present time, that is but concealed Mesmerism. To group, to combine, to classify, such phenomena, is both an interesting and profitable labour. And this we can do by Mesmerism only, for it only *professes* to deal with those recondite wonders, which science, who cannot bear not to seem to know everything, jeers at or denies, just because she knows nothing about them. Grand as it seems to call the convulsionaries of St. Médard, the Miracles wrought at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, the cures operated by Greatrakes, or (later) by Prince Hohenlohe, mix-

tures of fraud and folly, epidemics of public credulity, and other hard names,; yet, those who have no interest in pooh-poohing these things will ever consider them interesting subjects of examination. You smile if I believe in them. Believe in them indeed? *Everybody* believes in them as facts,—as events that have occurred. The Mesmerist alone, I venture to say, understands them.

And this understanding of things, which puzzle or pervert the great unthinking body of mankind, is a privilege, a boon that cannot easily be appreciated. Unarranged and unexplained phenomena are mischievous, and on them superstition builds her readiest masonry. I might assert, without fear of being mistaken, that the physical benefits, which Mesmerism is daily more and more rendering to the sick bodies of men, are surpassed by the mental advantages which its training and its truths are conveying to the spirits of men. Under rational explanation, health and vigour are returning to many a diseased and weakened understanding.

I have said, with respect to Mesmerism, that al the theories which would reduce it to known causes, and bring it "level to the meanest capacity."—which would slice it like bread and butter, and put it in a pot to boil like a piece of beef,—are, and must be, inadequate. The same remark applies *generally* to those wonders of our being, that every one confesses to exist,—likes to hear about,—but thinks it grand and manly to pooh-pooh, though sometimes indeed with a quavering voice, and always with a misgiving heart.

Men have an appetite for the wonderful. Some very dry philosophers think (or try to think) that

men create the wonders with which they excite and frighten themselves. But how came the love of wonder? Only, as it seems to me, through having wonders before us to call into play the God-given faculty. If men believe in some false wonders, it is because there are real wonders for them to believe. Are ghosts, witchcraft, vampyrism, utterly without foundation? I think not. There is no smoke without fire:* but to Mesmerism alone applies the motto—"Ex fumo dare lucem." All that can appal the outer or inner vision of man may be referred to the great Mesmeric head and fount of all possible marvel, namely, human influence acting through a medium. And the moment you explain mysterious phenomena, and refer them to an adequate cause, you rob them of their terror. And this is always the great march of human enquiry. Strange facts are first denied—then allowed to exist—then for some time perverted—then referred to some proper head. Thus astronomy was first astrology: thus electricity and mechanics once conferred a reputation for sorcery. In like manner, Mesmeric Influence, once witchcraft, will soon be brought into the domain of science, and will be studied by all true philosophers as a mixed phenomenon—partly physical, partly metaphysical—of man's mixed nature.

And here, especially, to use Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton's forcible language, "we are taller than our ancestors, because we stand upon their shoulders."

* I hope I here apply the proverb rightly. Often it is wrested from its real wisdom. Thus there *may* be calumny without foundation; as the late attacks on Prince Albert have shown. Even in this case, however, there was fire, namely, the hot hostility of the malignant.

It is not that we have better eyes than Pythagoras, or Aristotle, to observe or note phenomena, but that we have longer experience whereby to classify phenomena. Yet, sometimes the hour is come, but not the man; and, therefore, a man is great in his era who seizes on a multitude of facts, known before, to refer them to one great cause. Newton was great, not only because of intellect, but because his hour was come. Mesmer will be called great, when it is seen how he has marshalled facts under one cause, because he will be felt to have taken advantage of the hour. For him was reserved the glory of gathering the lore of Egypt, the occult science of the East, the oracles of Greece, under one head. Is this little? Or did such phenomena not exist? Observe also how Providence favours and permits the practice and extension of any art, to prohibit which there is no longer any reason. Wisely were natural magic, clairvoyance, and apparent spirit-raising forbidden to the idolators and illiterate Jews, to whom such occult practices, whether in the hands of ignorance, or of designing wickedness, might be dangerous, and subversive of proper views of the true and only God. Even in the times of Dun Scotus, or Cagliostro, secresy and evil intentions made the natural philosopher a true magician—to more than the multitude—to himself. But what is no longer occult is no longer hurtful. Where there is knowledge, there is no witchcraft. And this we owe to Mesmer. The moment that he pointed to a *cause*, the phenomena shrank to their proper dimensions; and, like good genii that had been lost in mist, came trooping to the daylight standard of Order. With Light and Order no wickedness

can consist, which alone is a sufficient answer to those who still rank Mesmerism with unholy lore and "conclusions most forbidden." With the reasons for the prohibition, the prohibition is itself withdrawn.* For us, it remains to do what all succeeding labourers are called on to do after a great pioneer—to prove the truth of Mesmer's theory by shewing how it embraces every fact of its own kind, even when new phenomena have to be added to the list. A large and fair domain it is that Mesmer has bequeathed us, and we must not mar it by poverty of our own. Let each Mesmerist so occupy his portion of it as to shew that it is like a beautiful estate which falls into the hands of a rich man; where the timber need not be cut down to supply the wants of the owner, or neglected for lack of funds, but only is cleared and thinned for its better growth, or to open some new vista to the admiring gaze.

In other words, if we are true to our principles, we need create neither a devastation, nor a confusion in Nature, by denying or mystifying her phenomena, but clear our ground, and see our way before us, by the proper application of our one great tenet.

And I, after my power, have done what I could towards reducing the sentient wonders that crowd upon our age to Law and Order.

Though loth to puff my own book, (which I should not do if writing anonymously,) I am, in a sort, forced to refer to it, as an authority on Mesmerism, which has been quoted for the last few years.

But, while I refer to it, I lay whatever little credit it may have brought me before the Manes of Mesmer.

* See A. B. in *Zoist*, No. XXVIII.: and Mr. Sandby in *Zoist*, No. XXIX.

Smile at the despised name as you will, I am in duty bound to acknowledge the Master of the magic spell. Time will vindicate me, and, "bringing in its revenges," will shew that hitherto we have not felt ourselves so deeply indebted to Mesmer, merely because we have spurned the gift he proffered—a gift no less than this—a destruction of superstition by gathering up, under the protection of One natural Cause, all the phenomena that feed her baneful power. Had Mesmer been listened to earlier, I need not have heard this sentence from the lips of an intelligent, but sceptical friend—"I *dare not* believe!"—which meant—"To believe in such phenomena as you bring before me would unsettle my mind." I might reply to such an one—

> "For shallow draughts intoxicate the brain:
> But drinking largely sobers us again."

Look at the Phenomena minutely—at their Cause largely—and *then* you may dare to believe.

The recognition of this truth, I imagine, was the real cause of the success of my *Facts in Mesmerism*, in which it is expounded. Many persons have related phenomena more startling than those which I there brought forward; but few have so entirely insisted on their Cause. My book was called "philosophical." And why? Because I followed Mesmer, and trod in the traces of his great induction.

Observe, moreover, how the discoverer of a new force and his immediate successors have invariably had to antedate the general belief of men. Genius always foreruns, to a certain extent, observation itself, and predicts things to come. Even Newton's undulating medium, or the vibratory theory of light,

though accepted by highest Science, has still its doubters; and, not so very long ago, the great mind of a Göthe, quitting its special sphere, betrayed how the highest talent, when refusing the aid of past discovery, may make itself absurd.

Never, at any period of the world's history, were these truths more needed to be brought to mind than now. There is an effervescence going on through the whole body of society, that ever attends new discovery, and marks a transitional æra in human knowledge. This effervescence is good: but, like that of wine, it must be managed, and cooled down, and (to borrow a French term) properly *transvased*, or we shall have our vintage ruined, and nothing but broken bottles instead of fine sparkling liquor. The influx of the spirit of enquiry upon the mass may well demand caution, while, at the same time, it should engender liberality of judgment.

Old experiments and new are being revived and tried—all of which have at the bottom one unavowed object, namely, to prove that agency which the world, often wrong in particulars, but never in the main, by one consent calls *Mesmerism*. How often do we hear, after some curious phenomenon has appeared, "There must be Mesmerism in this!" Now, many of the old new-revived experiments, which my friends and neighbours have been trying, although some of them are ridiculed in *the Quarterly*, and all referred by it to Suggestion, have struck me as interesting, and demonstrative of an occult agency.*

* The Suggestions in Hypnotism, Biology, &c., differ from ordinary suggestions in this remarkable respect. The person on whom the Suggestion is to act is *fore-warned*, which proverbially is equivalent to being *fore-armed*, We may, indeed, frighten a friend into

I will first mention the revival of an experiment, which in my Cambridge days I have often seen performed,—but which at that time I never reasoned about,—it is this. A man lies down at length, and flat on his back, on sundry chairs: two others stand (one on each side) at his shoulders: and two (one on each side) at his knees. These four persons introduce each the fore-finger under the man who is lying down. Then the five persons, that is, the one lying down and the four that are standing, all take breath together four times, and, at the fourth inspiration, the four simultaneously lift up the man on chairs. If the breathing be simultaneous, and only then, the man on the chairs is lifted up on the points of the fingers of those who stand on each side of him, with an ease that is astonishing. We tried this at the house of Mr. de C——, and I was twice one of the lifters. In the first experiment, a very tall man, Mr. L. G. d'H——, was the subject. The bearers were two gentlemen and two ladies. The ladies were in delicate health, and far from strong. Yet, at the fourth inspiration, up went Mr. L. G. d'H—— like a cork. To me the amount of weight seemed about as much as that of a large octavo book. Each of the other bearers gave the same account of their sensations as to weight.

Now, I must observe that, though I had seen the

thinking he is unwell, by telling him he looks very ill; but the moment he thinks we are *bamming* him, he is neither frightened nor influenced. Could I, with any effect, say to a man at a dinner-table, "Sir, you cannot move your arm—but I only say so to try whether I can suggest to you not to move your arm?" Yet, in Biology, the commands to the subject are equally overt with the foregoing, only some *previous* influence has rendered the subject amenable to the will of another. What is this influence? You cannot tell me!

experiment in former days, I had never tried it. I had no particular faith in it. I did not, at the moment I lifted, feel convinced that the subject would be light; but the very contrary. Thus the preternatural lightness of Mr. L. G. d'H—— filled me with amazement. Now, is this at all like the attempted explanation, that the body feels light because the lifter believes it will be light?

In the second experiment, we had the Earl of R. as subject. He was very incredulous about it, and declared his resolution to make himself as heavy as lead. Yet, the same four persons who had lifted Mr. L. G. d'H., also lifted Lord R. with the same ease, to the great surprise of the noble Lord himself, who said, "I tried to resist, but found myself going up like a balloon; and the four fingers under me felt only like little sticks." In both experiments, I should say that the subject went up a full yard in the air,—certainly higher than the backs of the chairs.

On the other hand, whenever the breathing of the bearers and the subject was not simultaneous, the experiment failed; and I have known a small person, under such circumstances, feel as heavy as one should suppose he naturally might when tried to be lifted by such inadequate means.

For these reasons, I think that the Suggestive Theory is inadequate to the occasion; while, at the same time, I perceive, in the case, an analogy to what I have frequently remarked in Mesmerism, namely, that few things influence a subject, whom you try to mesmerise, more than watching the breathing, and timing your own precisely to the measure of his. From this I should gather, that the breathing to time brings the lifters and the lifted

into Mesmeric relationship. That human bodies grow lighter if full of Mesmerism, I witnessed re-recently, when, Mr. Adrien de Constant having imbued with Mesmerism one of the girls whom Mr. Regazzoni brought to my house, and that only by the silent action of his will, it was found, both by myself and others, that she was one half easier to lift than when the Mesmerism was withdrawn. The girl was awake during the experiment. When lighter, she did not become so by lifting herself muscularly. But why should this be wonderful? Life itself seems to be a result of organic structure and atmospheric air, (or, more properly, of Zoogen comprised in atmospheric air,) since, without atmospheric air, no principle of life can be developed, or continued. The fact seems to be, that *some* principle of activity seems added by the will of Omnipotence to organized creatures, and that the accumulation of this principle causes a change in the gravity of bodies. Hence, most probably, the floating of supposed witches of old, when they underwent trial by water. They were really Sensitives, who, from accumulated Mesmerism, became buoyant.

Another experiment that I have seen much tried of late is, the tying a key into a book, with the top uppermost, then supporting the book by means of placing a little finger on each side of the key; and, finally, having some person to determine (professedly) by silent will which way the key shall turn with the book. This is an old mode of divination, once practised only with a Bible. Of course any book will do. In this experiment, there is no doubt that unconscious muscular motion plays a great part. You can scarcely balance your fingers so exactly but that the

book and key will turn at last. But, what unconscious muscular action does *not* account for, is, the number of times that the book and key will turn coincidently with an external will. To throw deuce ace six times running is not in the doctrine of chances. Yet, I have seen the key, when held by Madame de B——, turn, coincidently with my silent will, six times running. Indeed, it never failed. The following experiment I saw tried at the house of Mr. de B. One person held the key by which the book was suspended. Five or six others formed a chain by holding hands, the last of whom on one side touched the holder of the key. The person forming the other extreme of the chain was then whispered to, or shewn writing, by some person of the party not in the chain, whether the book should turn to the right or left. Each time this was tried at Mr. de B.'s house, the book turned coincidently with the duplicate wills of the person out of the chain, and the person who formed the extreme of the chain. This experiment was to me very convincing of a real case of thought-impressing. Moreover, I observed, that Sensitive and Mesmeric persons were so much impressed, that with them the experiment hardly ever failed; while, on the other hand, non-Mesmeric individuals of the party succeeded so seldom, as to leave a doubt (hardly permissible in the other case) whether they moved the book by any but muscular agency.

The question reduces itself to this. Is there, when certain conditions are united, a residual force, unaccounted for by muscular action? *I think there is.* No cautious philosopher will assert there is not. Equally rash would it be to decide in the negative the question whether the phenomena of the divining

rod have not some occult cause. Even the *Quarterly Review* allows that "the motions of the rod are *facts* —explain them how we will."

Whether a pre-idea in the mind of the agent can explain them, I must doubt, when such a man as Professor Agassiz has told me that at Neufchatel they use a man, gifted with the power of using the Divining Rod, whenever they want to dig a well in the neighbourhood, which is remarkably devoid of water. The Professor assured me that, for this purpose, he and a whole band of expectant persons have gone out to watch the motions of the rod which was held by the Diviner. Anxious to test the phenomenon, Professor Agassiz has caused diggings to be made where the rod did *not* turn; but never found water there: while, in a spot perhaps near the other, where the rod *did* turn, water was invariably discovered. Besides, as the Professor remarked, why does the rod turn in particular hands only? In his own the rod never turned, while in that of his friend and coadjutor, Mr. De Sorr, whose name is associated with that of Agassiz in the experiments upon glaciers, the rod turned readily to point out the existence of a spring.

How much better than the inadequate explanation of such phenomena being due to the mental state of the performers themselves, is Mesmer's Theory of a fluid connecting all things, yet modified by the substances through which it passes, and with which it combines! How this meets the case of the Divining Rod! The human agency, passing through the rod, and combining with the subterranean water, suffices to all the exigencies of the occasion.

If even these tranquil mysteries call aloud for an

adequate solution, *à fortiori* there is need of the Mesmeric Theory to meet the stirring phenomena that everywhere, now, are unsettling mankind. Table-turning and Table-divination—the most recondite of Eastern and Egyptian practices—are, like the gods, come down in shepherd's clothes to walk with Baucis and Philemon, become our familiar guests, and from drawing-rooms descend to cabarets and servants' halls. The consequences of this zeal without knowledge, and facts without explanation, are becoming, in the midst of much that appears ludicrous, essentially serious.

Men abandon one thing after another for the "newest new," and at last have such a hash and *olla podrida* in their heads, of spiritual and physical, of Mesmerism, Spirit-rapping, Table-turning and Table-talking, that what was rashly begun by only weak brains ends in absolute insanity. Thus have we a Robert Owen *(quantum mutatus!)* introducing the spirit of a dead duke to a living king with all the formality of court etiquette. Thus have we nerves shaken, folly established, faculties diminished, and mad-houses replenished. And all this is because men do not recognize an old friend under a new face, because exterior and apparent novelty is mistaken for real novelty. Whisper Mesmerism, and these phantoms will be exorcised—but not till then.

Observe now, how, as regards the absorbing question of Table-turning, the Mesmerist's creed, while it goes far enough to meet the case, reduces the matter to the level of common sense. And that not by denying the phenomena, or explaining them inefficiently. It leaves room for the probability that Table-turning has in it something more than mus-

cular impulsion. Even this is much. For, when a man (above all, a philosopher) has said, a thing cannot be so and so, or *is* so and so, he looks mighty silly when it turns out the contrary. A creed, then, that does not commit us by rash assertion, and arrogate decision, is, methinks, a good creed. It is singular that, all along, it is *we* who hold ourselves in philosophic doubt. That I have fathomed the *rationale* of Table-turning, I do not assert; but I may truly say that I have seen enough of it to convince me that there is, with some muscular impulsion, a residuary force, for which mere muscular impulsion does not account. It is to this residuary force that attention should be turned, and every means ought to be taken to eliminate, isolate, and examine the perplexing element.

I give my experimental reasons for believing that the muscular hypothesis will not cover the case.

1st.—I have myself assisted at an experiment where, draftsmen being laid on the table, and the fingers only lightly laid on these, the table went rapidly round without a single piece being displaced.

2ndly.—An unprepossessed person will remark that it is not the muscular man, or the strong man, that turns tables most easily, but often the man of small strength, or women; but, above all, very young children. The power of table-turning, being thus in inverse proportion to the muscular strength, would seem to point away from muscular action as the archaical cause.

In illustration of this, I may mention that Mr. F. M., a scientific man of Geneva, related in a letter, the contents of which were made known to me, that, having set his little children round a very large

drawing-room table, which their united strength exerted to the full was inadequate to turn, they, by simply laying their hands on it, caused it to revolve in about twenty minutes. Amazed, yet wishing to resolve his doubts, Mr. F. M. seated himself upon the table, which, however, continued to go round as rapidly as before. He concluded this account by saying, "What am I to believe? At least I must credit the evidence of my senses."

3rdly.—The fatiguing length of time that often elapses before a table moves would seem to be a reason for the diminished muscular power of the operators, who certainly must have been fresher and stronger when they first began the experiment. Those who vaguely rest their proof of mere muscular agency on this very point, and talk of the power of small *accumulated* impulsions, seem to me extremely inconsequent. *How* can impulsions be *accumulated* in the table? The very expression indicates just what we insist upon—namely, that there *is* an occult medium *capable* of accumulation.

4thly.—This view of the case becomes greatly strengthened by the following reflection. Every one who has tried table-turning knows that, when the table has once been set in motion, it is, after the hands are withdrawn, set spinning again, on a re-application of the hands, much sooner than at first. I have seen a heavy table, that took half an hour to turn, made to go round again almost instantaneously when the hands were reapplied.

Now, if the muscles effected the thing, they, being fatigued with exercise, would, it seems to me, on a second bout of exertion, be longer in turning the table.

5thly.—Unfavourable to the muscular hypothesis,

but falling in completely with the idea of a vital effluence, are sundry conditions which attend on Table-turning.

I have observed that a warm room and warmth in the table itself aids the rotation as much as warmth assists the transmission of Mesmeric agency. Above all, a table warmed by the contact of hands is in a state to be influenced. I have seen the same table, which went round in a moment with only one or two little fingers laid on it, when the room was warm, not stir at all, with many hands on it, when the room was cold. I have witnessed such proofs of this as entirely to give me the idea of an *imbuing* of the table with an imponderable fluid, and all unprejudiced observers talk of the phenomenon as if it were so. An English gentleman, Colonel B—— (residing here), his wife, and another lady, assured me that a large heavy table which scarcely moved with seven or eight persons round it, when the room was cold, had, on the preceding evening, when the room was warm, revolved rapidly by their having merely placed their hands lightly on a hat which was set upon it, and which remained perfectly stationary while the table was going round. The same table, on the united testimony of those who had been present, went round with the table-cover on it, and all the numerous glasses and knick-knacks that are seen in a lady's drawing-room, without wrinkling the cover, or displacing the articles.

Another condition of Table-turning that looks eminently Mesmeric is the following.

Several persons have assured me that they believed in table-turning, but could never effect it; and, on the contrary, when they laid the lightest finger on a

moving table, caused it to stop. I have witnessed this in the case of several anti-table-turners. On the other hand, some persons, who lay the lightest finger on a table, seem essential to its motion, and, as they form part of the chain, or withdraw from it, the table goes, or stops.

Another presumable proof of the disengagement of Mesmerism round a turning table is, that, in three cases here, ladies, during experiments of table-turning, fell suddenly and unsuggestively into the Mesmeric state, from which they could only be awakened by their respective *vis-à-vis*. One of the ladies, so affected, has assured me that to be mesmerised was the last thing in her thoughts when she tried table-turning. Besides, she never had been in a mesmeric state before.

Lastly.—The singular exhaustion consequent on Table-experimenting resembles exactly what happens after exertion in mesmerising. My cousin, Major Lake, an officer used to all the fatigues of the battle-field, and who manifested great powers of table-turning, assured me that it was as bad as a campaign; and, one morning, after a *soirée* of table-turning on a small scale, he declared, though he had slept well, that he felt as if he had been dancing all night, and that no ball had ever given him a more dissipated sensation. Sir Charles Style has borne witness to the same fact. I, who know what fatigue after Mesmerism is, declare that the sensation after Table-turning is only comparable to that.

All these conditions of Table-turning ought to be experimentally and carefully investigated. The thing is but in its infancy, and, as it does not seem disposed to die out so soon as its opponents wish, we may

hope that time will make one party less inclined to Dogmatism (which, according to *Punch*, is but full-grown Puppyism)—the other more disposed to strictness in experimentalizing; so that the phenomenon may have some chance of satisfactory solution. A few well-attested instances of Table-turning, without the contact of hands, would be enough to settle the controversy. I could have the attestations of most respectable witnesses to a fact which I witnessed, namely, of a table having followed a lady who had great power of table-turning, for some distance, after she and all of us had taken away our hands. But *one* experiment is not enough. Persons might say, "the dress caught in the table," &c., and I admit that I shall not be satisfied myself till I have seen some more and stricter experiments as to motion without contact.

The causing a human being to revolve is abundantly curious, and has this advantage as an experiment, that the human subject can testify as to whether he feels pushed or not by the muscular force of those who have their hands placed round his chest. Lord R., here, who was obstinate not to move, and did not believe in Table-turning, was forced to rotate, and to confess that nobody pushed him in the least. But, then, as the chain round him was chiefly formed of fair ladies, there was no wonder that his head, at least, was turned.

A priori, there is nothing incredible in matter being moved by an imponderable agent; and that the Mesmeric medium should avail to stir inanimate as well as animate masses is but an extension, if not a consequence, of the Mesmerists' creed. At any rate, the moving tables, if we perform the process

of *in*duction, instead of *de*duction, may become valuable evidence of a force, or medium, that acts beyond ourselves, especially to those who think a grossly sensuous proof of any recondite matter essential to conviction.

Be this as it may, the Mesmerist, seeing much *primâ facie* evidence that the tables turn by *more* than muscular force, deduces thence new reasons whereby to combat superstition.

In every case, which I have had the opportunity of examining, I have seen that the so-called table-talking is a mere echo of some human will. Some wonder-mongers had told me that the moving table could rap out things unknown to any one in company, that it had told them how many pieces of money they had in their purses when they themselves were ignorant of the same, or how many nuts, taken at random out of a plate, and not counted, they held in their hands. I have tried these experiments with the very relators of these marvels, but invariably, when no one present knew the amount of the objects to be certified, the answer was wrong; as invariably, when any one who had a finger in the pie knew the number of the things, the answer was right. So of ages; and in one case where an operator was doubtful if he were twenty-nine, or thirty, the table doubtfully vacillated between the two numbers.

Yet I was sure of the good faith of the person whose will directed the experiment, and I observed that the table did not bend to his side, neither immediately opposite to him, but in another direction. When Sir Charles Style (who kindly permits me to use his name) assisted at a table-moving experiment,

and commanded the table, I observed the same presumptive proof that not his muscles, but his will, actuated the thing. The table was not influenced in the part where he stood, and moreover counteracted my efforts to keep it still. I have also been shewn a letter from a most intelligent lady of the first respectability, who states in it that her children, of a young age, have great force in table-turning, but not in table-influencing, and that she, sitting at a long distance from them and the table which they are turning, can, by the sole activity of her silent will, direct their passive wills, so as to make the table turn or rap as she desires. From this she justly draws the inference that one human will influences another, while other phenomena of table-turning convince her that the muscular theory is inadequate.

Even if there be not one cause to all these things, the referring them, for the present, to one cause, aids the orderly arrangement and examination of them. Galvanism and Magnetism would not be as well understood as they are now, if an *à priori* generalization had not presumed Electricity to be the head and cause of both.

At any rate such systematizing can alone avail to turn in a right direction the love of mankind for the marvellous. Persons who ask, "Are we in the nineteenth century?" when they hear of books coming out with titles sweetly alliterative as those of the old puritanic theories—as, for example, *Table-turning, the Devil's modern master-piece;* or again, *Satanic Wonders and Prophetic Signs: a word for the wise:* persons, I say, who are astonished at such recent displays of ignorant narrowness, forget how little has been done to enlighten mankind in the dark yet

ever attractive domain of supernatural mystery. It is true we no longer hang, burn, or drown for witchcraft, but we gibbet by opinion any one who seriously attempts to bring a torch into the gloomy mines of superstition. We do not now indeed imprison a Galileo, but we proscribe enquiry, and put a Pariah mark on the man who dares to say of any startling phenomena, "These things are!" or even of a turning table, "E pur si muove!" And yet nothing is ever put down by denying it; while everything can be done by first admitting and then explaining. Till this better way is tried, we shall have (for human nature is ever the same) bigotry and folly in the dark places—such silly blasphemy as that of the Rev. Messieurs Gillson and Godfrey—Bibles, that turn out to be Hoyle on Whist, stopping the eloquence of a diabolic table, innumerable devils in Bath, and Rome denounced as Satan's head-quarters.

In accordance with my principle, I proceed to a brief examination of what is called Spirit-rapping. I might easily dismiss it by saying, "It is all imposture!" but this would only "scotch the snake, not kill it." Rather will I consider what there may be of true amidst much that is false in this new phase of wonder (or, if you will, folly), and how much the Mesmeric Agency may have to do with it.

As to even such apparent sillinesses as Spirit-rapping, Fiend-rapping, and other rappings at the door of public credulity, you will never lay the ghost till you shew of what it is made, or of what it may be made.

I begin by supposing that every case of rapping is not an imposition. The true Mesmerist has an enlarged charity, and is loth to mark any of his fellow-

creatures with the brand of deliberate imposture. To be sure, when the personages called Mediums (I steal the joke from *Punch)* "sell spirits without a license," we may have our doubts as to the agency that produces the rappings. But what are we to say when men like Robert Owen and Dr. Ashburner, or ladies such as the daughter of a certain Consul in Paris, have themselves become Mediums? Surely the affair now assumes a different aspect. And may we not now suspect that natural causes are mingled with delusion?

A priori, nothing can be sillier than the ways taken by the wise to disprove these things. The pseudo-philosophers go about shewing how raps can be made, forgetful that raps may be made in a thousand ways, and that one of these thousand ways may be by something occult. *A propos* of this, I extract from the *Atlas* the following:—

"Recently, at Edinburgh, Professor Anderson gave his audience a specimen of table-rapping, *which he shewed to be a juggle,* though in America thousands have been driven by it into a state of religious frenzy. After making the spirit enclosed within a hollow table obedient to his behests, to the satisfaction of his audience, he then removed the top of the table, and exhibited the said mysterious agent, which consisted of a small hammer similar to those which beat the hours of our clocks, and which was under the influence of a galvanic battery, connected to it by a wire conducted along the floor from beneath the stage."

On this I would remark that Professor Anderson need not have resorted to such elaborate contrivances for producing raps, seeing that with his own toes he

could have rapped under the table. Then how illogical is the notion that *thus* the Professor shewed Spirit-rapping "to be a juggle!" I never could perceive, either with regard to Table-rapping, or Mesmerism, how a man getting up and saying, "See (or listen), I can do this myself," proves anything against a case. This sort of argument only reminds one of Goldsmith, in his jealousy of some Fanny Ellsler of his day, having stood on one leg for a longer time than the dancer had done, exclaiming proudly, "See! I can do it better myself!" But things may be done in many ways. Stage-thunder does not impugn the existence of real thunder. How many phenomena, that can be imitated, have been found capable of genuine induction, and, while discovered to be, in certain cases, abnormally produced, have been found, at the same time, dependent on strictly natural causes.

As it seems to me, the so-called Spirit-rapping involves many questions—more indeed than, at first sight, might appear. The principal question, however, is this. Can certain rappings be produced, not indeed supernaturally, but abnormally? To decide this at once in the negative were both unphilosophic and premature. Because there was a Cock-lane Ghost, it does not follow that there are no raps made without fraud: though at the same time, if some curious rappings have occurred without human muscular agency, it by no means follows that they have been produced by *spirits*. Subservient to this question, "Do abnormal rappings sometimes occur?" is another, which is forced upon us by the pretensions of Mediums, and (to a certain degree) by the testimony of those who frequent Mediums—namely,

"Are the rappings, whether made by the feet or otherwise, in connection with anything like Mesmeric sensitiveness, or Clairvoyance?

Before I enter on these points, I would observe how completely the word *Medium* reduces the idea of Spirit-rapping to a disproof *ex absurdo*.

A priori a Medium is a most illogical animal—an ill-baptized being, that seems to have little connection with the subject in hand. If there be any meaning in the word *Medium*, it is that the rappings occur through the mediation of some certain individual. This inevitable piece of definition leads us to curious enquiries. If Spirits can rap, why don't they rap without a Medium? If the rappings are made by Spirits, why must the Medium touch the table, and sit with legs under the table? Of what use is the Medium? How is the Medium a Medium?—of what? or between what? The Medium sits and apparently does nothing, but very politely asks, "Are there any Spirits in the room?"—an unnecessary question, one might think, as, when it is asked, rappings may have already betokened spiritual presence: or again, with great politeness, "Will the Spirits have the goodness to answer the gentleman?" (or lady, as the case may be). Yet the querist is encouraged to ask of the ghostly population questions for himself, which are duly (or unduly) answered, without any ostensible interference on the part of the so-called Medium, who indeed only seems to play the part of high usher to the spirit-court, and to introduce the dead to the living. Indeed, the Spirits seem to have carried with them into the next world an extra dose of the punctilio of this. Introductions are all the order of their day. Beau

Brummel, who said, when a man was drowning, "Will no one introduce me to him, that I may have the pleasure of saving his life?" was nothing to them. Indeed, as regards spirit-etiquette, there must be not only introduction, but re-introduction. Robert Owen must re-introduce the Duke of Kent to King Leopold as his spirit-friend, and H.R.H. has to say that he will have great pleasure in re-making, in a new guise, the acquaintance of his Belgian Majesty. Thus it appears that the Medium, who denies having anything to do with the raps, sits by the table only in two possible capacities—namely, as spirit-attractor, or as spirit-introducer. But to draw Spirits as lightning-conductors attract lightning, or as a loadstone aggregates iron filings, is not to be a Medium. The Medium-ship is therefore limited to the introducing part of the business, and what sort of Medium-ship that is I need not say, as it falls to pieces from its own absurdity. In short, the term Medium is a misnomer, and has charlatanism on the very face of it. Possibly some may think that it endorses the whole affair as a quibble and a lie. But a reflective mind will consider that (according to the poet)

"There is no lie without a grain of truth."

Just as table-moving *may* be caused by hands, yet probably does sometimes occur from an ulterior and recondite force, so table-rappings may be made by art (and probably sometimes are, for fraudulent purposes); yet occasionally may take place without the usual agency. My reasons for this I now proceed to give.

First, I would remark, that for singular noises

there have been sometimes found abnormal reasons; while, at the same time, these abnormal sounds have given rise, just as Spirit-rapping does, to the most superstitious conclusions.

In *Hibbert on Apparitions* it is allowed that many of the mysterious noises in old houses, such as rappings, bell-ringings, sounds like people walking about, and even displacements of furniture, incontestibly proceed from the disengagement of gases from the bodies of the dying or dead. Nay, this cause is supposed to act (so potent is it) long after the bodies themselves have gone to the grave, and to have produced such impressions on the senses of the inmates of such mansions, as to make them see spectres, and all the paraphernalia of haunted houses. In a book, called *Bealings Bells,* to which the Quaker poet, Bernard Barton, has given the sign manual of his belief in some excellent verses, are some very curious accounts of bells which, untouched by hands, have rung unaccountably from the chambers of sick persons—facts, which may account for the vulgar notion that such a phenomenon in a house predicts the death of some one.

If we apply these things to the solution of Spirit-rapping, we shall be immediately struck by observing that the Mediums are often persons of disordered health and unstrung nerves (circumstances of their constitution which listening for spirits is not likely to improve), and hence we may conjecture that some irregular disengagement of Zoogen from their system causes the abnormal rappings. What strengthens this view of the case is the disastrous end of some of the rapping Mediums in infirmaries or mad-houses. On this view of the case, it is not

so much that Spirit-rapping produces madness, as that madness produces Spirit-rapping. Indeed, what subsequent proof of insanity can a man give greater than his anterior belief in the possibility of Spirit-*rapping*, or of any material acts of departed Spirits. The following extract from *Galignani's Messenger* will shew, at least in one instance, of what stuff those brains are made that profess to communicate with the Spirit-world:—

"We have noticed the letter of M. Victor Hennequin, the ex-representative of the people, announcing his intention of publishing a work called *Sauvons le Genre Humain*, and in which he declared that he would make important revelations, communicated to him by "the Spirit of the Earth.' This work, which appeared several weeks ago, has been reviewed by several journals, some of whom have naturally regarded it as the production of a disordered brain, whilst others have doubted the sincerity of the writer. Amongst the latter is the *Abeille de Bugey*. Its observations have called forth a letter from M. Hennequin, which we subjoin. Whilst he protests his sincerity, and contends for his sanity, he reveals a lamentable fact, the insanity of his wife, under the same influence which he says has left him sane. The letter is as follows:—

"'Paris, Dec. 12.

"'Sir—You have sent me on *Sauvons le Genre Humain* an article, the intention of which I must believe to be good, although my good faith is therein called in question, with a want of reflection which you will doubtless regret. The writing of my book has been directed not by the 'Spirit of the World,' but by 'the Spirit of the Earth,' which, after having commenced its relations with me by the movement of tables and of hats, has endowed me with involuntary writing, and ended by insinuating its very idea into my

brain. If you knew me, you would believe in my declaration alone, but as you do not know me, I will tell you that Mme. Victor Hennequin, who took part in the origin of these communications, has had her nerves so shattered that I have been obliged to place her in the house of Dr. Archambaut, 162 Rue de Charonne, devoted to the treatment of cases of mental alienation. So painful a fact will sufficiently defend me against the accusation of having mystified the public, and you will comprehend my interest and my right in demanding that this letter may be inserted in the earliest number of your journal.

"'VICTOR HENNEQUIN.'"

Here is sincerity—but here is madness too. In the above extract we clearly see table-talking and involuntary writing in connection with both incipient and confirmed madness.

But, furthermore, rappings of an abnormal character may be both heard and created, under the influence of mere temporary indisposition, by those who have no belief in Spirit-rapping, and are (and, I trust, ever will be) of sound mind. Two cases of this kind have come under my cognizance. The first is that of a very celebrated writer, whose name alone, might I give it, would be a sufficient guarantee that the phenomenon was authentic. He told me, that, being alone one day in a room of his own house (he being kept at home by illness), he suddenly became aware of rappings on a large round table that stood in the middle of the apartment. In order to certify the thing, he called up his secretary, but said nothing to him respecting the real cause of his summons. While speaking to the secretary on indifferent matters, the man exclaimed, "Oh, Sir! how strange! do you hear it? Hark,

there is a rapping on the table just as if little fairies were at work there with their hammers." Yes, it was so! Both the author and his secretary distinctly heard the rappings, which continued for about a quarter of an hour, then ceased, and did not recur again.

In the other instance, the rappings were renewed often, more especially at night when the sick person was lying sleepless on his bed, and he was aware that there was some connexion between the restless state of his brain and the rappings—a fact which aids our thesis, that cerebral excitement produces, in rare instances, abnormal rappings. The readers of the *Seherin von Prevorst* will perhaps also remember proofs being given of the power of the Somnambulist (rendered so by sickness) to produce by will and cerebral action effects like rapping.

The following story, also, I have amongst my papers, written and signed by the gentleman, a clergyman, to whom the incident it records occurred. But, as I cannot immediately lay my hand upon the document, I give the substance of it in my own words.

Mr. R—— and his wife were in bed at their own house, when they both heard strange patterings and sounds about the passages, as if some one were walking about the house and trying at the different doors. Uneasy at this, they got up several times, and, with a light, examined every part of the house; but there was no creature, not even a cat or a mouse, to be discovered. This state of things lasted till three or four o'clock in the morning, when, probably at cock-crow, the orthodox hour for ghosts taking their departure, all became still. The next day, Mr. and Mrs. R. went to see the bed-ridden Grandmother

of the former, who had been ill many years, and who lived about six miles off. Directly they entered the old lady's room, she cried out to them, "Did you hear me last night? I was wandering about, in spirit, for some hours in your house; but I could not very well find my way. I tried to get to your room, but, not exactly knowing the door, I rapped at several." Mr. R. declared that the old Lady, though ill, was not delirious; but had been so impressed with a vision of having actually visited his house during the night, that she could not help speaking of it as a reality. That her cerebral excitement had had its audible effects, Mr. R. could not for a moment doubt.

Remarking all these things, and remembering, "fas est ab hoste doceri," I am disposed, with regard to Spirit-rapping, to adopt the *Quarterly* Reviewer's maxim, (though but for this occasion only,) that "the phenomena, even when genuine, are due to the mental (more probably, however, physical) state of the performers themselves." Let any one observe how entirely the talking-tables of Messrs. Gillson and Godfrey respond to the uncharitable and bigoted impulses of their own brains. Let any one furthermore remark, in Robert Owen's account of his communications with the so-called Spirits, how completely the conversations savour of the monologue, and are but repetitions of the wishes, interests, and views of Robert Owen.

Thus the Spirit of *His Royal Highness* the Duke of Kent (Alas! alas! Royal Hignesses in the next world!) is only summoned to tell Robert Owen when he shall publish a pamphlet, to whom it shall be dedicated, and in what terms, or whether Robert

Owen shall go to Seven Oaks, or elsewhere for the winter; while the ghost of Grace Fletcher is evoked for the following sublime purpose, the gist of which shall be made manifest in Robert Owen's own words. Thus writes he :—

"On Wednesday, October the 12th, I had a *séance* with Eliza Finch, and the Spirit of Grace Fletcher was present. She is a kind-hearted spirit, and I asked her to tell me what would be good for my cold. 'You must have some beef tea and go to bed. Put a bottle of hot water to your feet. You should not go out in the damp. Do not forget to take beef tea at night when you go to bed; and wrap yourself up warm. Good bye—no more at present!'"

Surely there needed no ghost from the grave to give Robert Owen the above sensible advice. And it is ever thus in Spirit-rapping. The violated rule, "nec Deus intersit," &c., invariably brings about a bathos of the profoundest kind. Then how ridiculous seems the formulas of this world when proceeding from the inhabitants of the next? H.R.H. the Duke of Kent is remarkably fond of "Good bye! Good bye!" Sometimes he pops up only just to say, "How d'ye do? Good bye!" just as Punch might do in a shew-box.

Examined impartially, the phenomena of professed Spirit-rapping always indicate a presiding mind; but then, a human mind, and that mind, too, the mind of the Medium. A friend of mine (the same celebrated Author who heard rappings in his own house) was convinced of this by the following incident. At Mrs. Haydon's he received, by raps, an answer to a question. A word in the answer was mis-spelt. Afterwards, my friend asked Mrs. Haydon, "How

do you spell such or such a word?" She told him, and mis-spelt the word exactly as the Spirit had done. My friend made Mrs. Haydon aware of this, and said to her, "Now confess, you have something to do with the answers?" On which Mrs. Haydon candidly avowed that she *had*.

In the same way, when I myself went to Mrs. Haydon, the supposed Spirit of a lately deceased friend sent the following message to his widow. "My dearest love, I am very happy." This language was precisely what Mrs. Haydon would use, but what my friend never *would* have used. The message was not in the least like him. Moreover, I must avow, that, though the name of my friend and the date of his death were correctly rapped out, I felt that I rather hesitated over the right letters of the alphabet, down which I drew my pencil; and the impression on my mind was, that I was, as it were, assisting (though not intentionally) the Medium. My Cousin Major Lake, who was with me, on the contrary, when *his* friend was called up, dotted along the alphabet with military precision, and in strict marching order: from which tactics resulted this fact, that the ghost did not know his own name: though he declared the manner of his death with sufficient truth, by spelling out the single word, "*Shot!*" a piece of correctness which Major Lake perversely attributed to his own bronzed aspect and formidable whiskers.

These things are against the genuineness of some Spirit-rapping cases: though, with all deductions, I felt the thing to be curious. But, then, one remembers how the automaton chess-player seemed to play of himself, and how difficult of detection was the machinery that connected him with the directing

mind of the real player. The industrious fleas, too, by moving round a circle, and stopping at certain letters which referred the querist to certain sentences in a book, seemed to have human reason, nay more, an oracular knowledge, beyond anything that I have seen or heard of in Spirit-rapping. They startled me once by seeming to respond to my inmost thoughts; yet, they were but fleas in harness after all! A recollection of such ingenious contrivances cannot but make us cautious how we accept rapping phenomena as genuine; and when, as is related by Robert Owen, *à propos* of an "empty hat-box," "the media placed their hands on the box, and immediately numerous different raps were made," it is impossible to help exclaiming with a German character in a play, "Hein—hein! I have my suspicions!" Yet, when I think of the thirty thousand Mediums in America, I almost discard the toe-hypothesis because of its very shallowness. The thing seems too miserable and obvious even for a deception. And, besides, (to come to the clairvoyant part of the business,) some revelations made in Spirit-rapping, which I have been told confidentially, overpass the bounds of deception. These I am not at liberty to mention. But, in a general way, I may assert that no unprejudiced person can have read the Articles on the subject of Spirit-rapping which succeeded each other, *pro* and *con*, in the *Leader*, during March and April, 1853, without perceiving that the communications on the favourable side, especially those signed Z, bear evident marks of sincerity, and, I may add, can be only solved on the theory of the Mesmeric perception of Sensitives. In many of these it will be perceived that the Rappings are but a se-

condary affair. It is the clairvoyant revelation, and thought-reading (those I mean, which took place apart from the fallacious alphabet) that, if we grant the accounts themselves to be genuine, remain a wonder to all but the Mesmerist.

Who but he could deal with the following statement, which yet seems made by a respectable person?

"At a distance of two hundred and fifty miles from the Medium I was first introduced to, and in the privacy and stillness of my bed-chamber, I have had on several occasions, these manifestations given me, as promised, by a very near relative, who is now in the Spirit-world."*

Here we have an instance of that want of logic upon which the whole notion of Spirit-rapping is based. Rappings are heard, and it is immediately decided that they are made by the Spirit of a very near relative. But how, or on what assurance can a man know this? The Spirit can tell him nothing that was not known mutually by himself and the deceased relative. Thus, all communications which would seem to prove the real presence of the relative, may come from the man's own brain. Then, as to the raps themselves, we have seen that they may proceed either from a man's own cerebral excitement, or through the instrumentality of an excited Medium. View the case as you will, you can never prove Spirit agency.

But, methinks, I hear a cry of horror from the religious party, (or parties,) a cry which splits off into two divisions, and returns echoing from right and left, to assail me in the centre. This cry proceeds,

* See the *Leader* for Saturday, April 23rd, 1853.

on the one hand, from those who devoutly believe Spirit-rapping to be a holy and beautiful thing—on the other, from those who as devoutly believe it to be "the Devil's modern master-piece."

Let me say a few words to the first. The latter are beyond reason. Besides, why deprive Messrs. Gillson and Godfrey of the pleasure of their demoniac visitants? If I could exorcise "Envy, Hatred, Malice, and all Uncharitableness," the only Devils present, as far as I can perceive, at the Reverend Gentlemen's *séances*, I would preach away *con amore;* but I have no hopes of so blessed a consummation. I therefore confine my little sermon to the pious and sentimental, who would antedate the joy of the next world by conversing with their departing friends in this.

I begin (always a good beginning) by a concession. I acknowledge that even a credulous belief in spiritual presences may, like all other weak instruments of God, produce its good. Many, besides Robert Owen, have said, "I was a sceptic as to Christianity, and a disbeliever in a future state. I am now a Christian, and I believe in a future state; and the change in me has been entirely effected by Spirit-rapping." Here is an undeniable benefit conferred by the despised thing. But might not the benefit have been otherwise obtained, and without the attendant evil? The big recoil from utter Scepticism is often to the wildest Credulity. Methinks, the gradual influences of Mesmerism might more safely have weaned the Infidel from disbelief. The most pure and rational conversion from Atheism of which I ever met with an example, was through the instrumentality of Mesmerism.

But the advocate for *bonâ fide* Spirit-rapping will say—

> "It is a beautiful belief,
> That ever round our head,
> Are hovering on angel wings,
> The spirits of the dead."

I pray you look with sane eyes on the incongruity. Imagine a soul, that has doffed its earthly weeds, being still encumbered with the ceremonial of life—keeping up a sympathy with introductions, and being bound, Ixion-like, with its new nature, to the old routine, the revolving wheel of custom! Imagine a spirit having, without any of the pleasure, the trouble of still witnessing the gettings up and goings to bed—the dinnerings and teaings, visitings, gossipings, card-playings, bowings, and blue-ribbonings of polite society! Imagine a soul with its fresh affinity to the skies, being obliged to golosh it still on muddy earth! Oh, be kind to your departed friend! Do not condemn him, spirit as he is, to rap on tables! Do not constitute him Drum-major to the other world! Do not make a tabernacle for him in a wooden plank! Why, I should have even too much regard for "auld Clootie" to imprison him in deal or mahogany! But one's friend! Believe me, my dear Sir, your "beautiful belief" is but the most intense selfishness. If it was really your friend you loved, and not yourself, would you trouble his blessed serenity by even the knowledge of any care that disturbs your own bosom? But to call him back to earth on the most ignoble errands—to tell you when to put your feet in warm water, or when to have your kitchen-chimney swept—I beseech you, do not

think of it! I am no heartless Pharisee—I believe in a future state—many things disallowed by arrogance I believe—but of this one thing—this Spirit-rapping, I say, it is impossible! Nor is this dogmatism. About phenomena that happen contrary only to the local and temporary arrangements of sense I never venture to be positive. If I have the idea of sight, I am not particular about the apparatus by which it comes to me. If I have reason to think that a perceptive faculty can be developed out of the sphere of the eyes, I see nothing in this contrary to a permanent law, only to our limited experience: but, in the case of spirits coming to rap, I see the reversion of a great general law—a reversion which, so far from producing good, is fraught with evil, sad for the dead, perilous for the living. It is not like the ways of God. Under Him everything keeps its own realm. "The earth has He given to the children of men," but not to ghosts. Such an infringement of the Law of order, if carried out through creation, would

"Make a sop of all the solid globe."

I say, then, that this Spirit-rapping cannot be, because it is contrary to the general Law of beauty and order.

Yet, I am not afraid that these escape-valves for the human love of wonder will do all the harm that is predicated of them. Folly and wickedness are in a man's self; tinder will catch fire somehow; and, whether a man goes wild with regard to Spirit-rapping, or gets uncharitable and bigoted over a turning-table, we may be sure that something else would have served his turn as well, and have been

fastened on by him as a pretext for carrying out the impulses of his own morbid brain.

The result, then, of our enquiry into Spirit-rapping seems to be this. Whatever in it is contrary to sound reason, results either from fraud or error: while, whatever puzzling *residuum* may be left, is entirely accounted for by the Mesmeric Theory of an agent which sometimes produces material effects through cerebral motion, and, in rare cases, causes such encreased mental perception as reaches to a knowledge of distant events or of the thoughts of other persons.

Thus Mesmerism meets this as it does every other case of abnormal phenomena relating to man.

Thus have I tried to shew, by the evils attendant upon any other way, that Mesmerism alone confronts both Unbelief and Superstition at once, and is alone to be relied upon as the golden mean between Prejudice and Absurdity. If candour obliges us to say, "Such or such strange phenomena *are*," Mesmerism is at hand to tell us, "Here is the cause:" and a known cause is a cure for all alarm. We are rarely frightened but in the dark. Be it then ours to take the wonder, and the reason for the wonder, in conjunction—the salt with the meat: and, though a recent writer has exercised his ingenuity by trying to prove that salt is poison, I venture to say that neither it nor Mesmerism can be dispensed with in proper doses.

The subject is important.

Agreeing generally with some of the concluding remarks in the *Quarterly Review*, I extremely differ as to the remedies suggested for human folly. Perhaps it may be true that "the study of *human nature*

—physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, is by far too much neglected in our educational arrangements." Certainly it is true that "an acquaintance with the constitution of his mind" is as necessary to man's welfare as "a knowledge of the structure and functions of his body:" again, it is true that Insanity is fostered (I do not think engendered) by want of acquirement, especially in early life, of self-controlling habits. These things are all pretty true —but, alas, they are *but* truisms! If they were doled out to me by any one in conversation, I should keep on saying, as I once did to a lady who was talking very sensibly, "True!" "very true!" "oh quite true!" till, like the lady, my indignant interlocutor might exclaim, "Why, you make me talk nothing but truisms!"

But the *Quarterly Review*, to its truisms about the mischiefs resulting from the want of "prudent, cautious, self-control," appends its own little nostrum to cure the evil. Here we take different roads. When I am told that the "deficiency of power to repel the fascinations of some attractive delusion," "through employing the reason to strip off its specious disguise and expose its latent absurdities," proceeds from "the want of acquirement of proper volitional control over the current of thought," and that to supply this want "ought to be one of the prominent objects of educational culture (!) in every grade,"—I no longer say, "How true!" but "how trite and insufficient!" Proper volitional control is indeed a desirable thing, and that the inculcation of it should be attended to in education, no one will deny. But this moral control, this intellectual supremacy will *not* be attained by *only* stripping off

"specious disguises" and exposing "latent absurdities."

Such a habit, itself becoming a tyranny, will, if exercised singly, tend to make self-sufficient men and miserable logicians. This is one of the cases where the remedy is worse than the disease. There is no use in learning to control the mind, if you do not control it to some purpose, and not only learn what to exclude but what to admit. To a mind that is ever employing reason to strip off "specious disguises," every novel fact will be but a specious disguise—to a mind ever occupied in exposing "latent absurdities," absurdity will be found everywhere, and ridicule will become the test of truth. Besides, such a mind is never safe from some sudden and overpowering invasion of *true* truth, whose unaccustomed force may upset it more than even looser habits of belief. The habit of eliminating facts from discordant elements, and of patiently referring them to adequate causes, is the only true preservative of reason. But, alas, such a habit demands *too much* self-control for men of the high-trotting kind!

Oh how we the Mesmerists could turn the tables (without muscular movement!) on our adversaries! The words, "Dominant Ideas," which are "the Be-all and the End-all" of the *Quarterly Review*, may be thrown back in the teeth of our opponents! If in this case we are "kettles," they most truly are "pots," and it does not become them to call us names. "Dominant ideas are not only exercised on *one* subject."

Little more remains for me than to sum up the argument.

We have phenomena before us, and the human

mind (even as the attempt in the *Quarterly* proves) seeks for a solution of those phenomena. If known causes suffice to solve them, well and good. But, lo! the opposite party have done their best, (making good the old proverb, "bad is the best,") and the result is very unsatisfactory indeed. All our old friends and faculties desert us on the occasion. Suggestion* puts but a bad leg foremost—Imagination halts, and Reverie drops into a self-sleep. To what then are we forced? "Get a new master—get a new man!" says the song. We have "a new man"—a new phenomenon—a state induced upon one human being by another; and we must "get a new master," or at least look for him.

Above all, we must get a *real* master—a force sufficient for the occasion. An inadequate Theory is as inadmissible as mediocrity in poetry. It is not natural; for Nature deals out her powers with a lavish hand. It has been well observed, even of human passions, that not one of them, unless so strong as to carry us too far, is available to carry us far enough. How much more is this the case with cosmical forces! Electricity kills and destroys—yet it balances the atmosphere.

Now the Mesmeric Theory, which (briefly) is, "the human influence acting through a medium," is amply adequate to our exigencies, with this beautiful peculiarity: it is never hurtful. It suffices, but it does not harm. It has the benefit of unity: it envelopes

* At any rate, the Nervous Power is better ascertained and understood than any such doubtful faculty as Suggestion, respecting which Sir James Mackintosh says:—"Why may not what is called the Association of Ideas, the attraction between thoughts, the power of one to suggest another, be affected by mental laws, hitherto unexplored—perhaps unobserved?"

the phenomena; it asserts and marshals them in due array, gives each hue of Nature its definite place—each tangled skein of thought its proper reel, whereon it may be wound off, like the silkworm's labyrinthine cocoon, into a single thread.

Let us remark, too, that the Mesmeric Theory is but an expression of facts. What proves remarkably how little we have had to do with Theory as *mere* Theory is, that, since Mesmer's time, we have said very little about any Theory at all. Each Mesmerist has worked for himself in the vast field of Nature. Since Mesmer's discovery, the methods of mesmerisation have been changed, improved, rendered more safe and certain; and this, in itself, shews that we are not authority-mongers, who go by *precedent* (another name for *want of principle*). But the time is now come to re-take up Theory. Nay, we are forced to arms: for our opponents themselves begin to Theorize. Hitherto, in their ignorance and arrogance—which they call common sense—they have had matters pretty much their own way. But it is time that we assume our proper and (to theirs) superior position. We stand on the positive—they on the negative side. We assert: they deny. For their denial they have nothing to shew: for our assertion we have everything to shew. For us innumerable circumstances prove an agent: on their side no circumstance invalidates the existence of an agent. The controversy, if it remain a controversy, can never be disposed of against us. It must continue, like everything of which the disproof is impossible, to be agitated to the end of time. Easy indeed it is to make clean decks by sweeping away masts, sails,

and everything: easy to assert a thing is or is not. But this is idle work. Hitherto, all that our adversaries have brought against us are such resolutions as are got up at party-meetings—a sort of reasoning that runs thus, "Resolved, that a thing *is* so—resolved, *because* it is so, &c." The whole reminds me of the educational controversy in Scotland, and its *whereas*-es. "Whereas, God has visibly a controversy with this nation; and whereas, there is reason to believe, &c." Grant the first step, and the whole runs on wheels. But who *will* grant the first step? None but the makers of it.

Of course, the cultivators of what are called the *certain* sciences dislike our wide and inexhaustible field of study. It is uncongenial to them. But let them be logical in their hatreds. Let them go and hate the Metaphysician, who maps out every fifty years the mental realm anew; or the Meteorologist, who tries to classify the changes of the weather, but only finds a certain amount of uncertain quantities at the end; or even the more sure Chemist, whose originally four elements have multiplied by observation to fifty-four and upwards: or the physician, whose knowledge is never so certain but that it is (or ought to be) on the increase. But let us not be hated because we beat a different ground to any of these. Rather let gratitude be due to us for undertaking investigations, for which the cultivators of the exact sciences are manifestly unfit. Let them be thankful that the interesting grounds which they would make or leave a desert is occupied. "Entertaining the lowest possible opinion of the logical powers of the great bulk of the detractors from the

mesmeric system,"* I assert that our opponents have not one intellect amongst their ranks capable of investigating

"The shadowy realm where Mind and Matter meet."

Miserable metaphysicians—shallow in physics—incapable of either large or profound thought, full of pompous nothingness, good at a sneer, bad at an argument, they must leave the task to their betters. So weak do their reasonings against Mesmerism seem, that one might suspect they do not persuade themselves, and that, with all the finesse of such writers as Braid, Holland, and Carpenter, *et hoc genus omne* ("ca me—ca thee" sort of people), they cannot always impose on their own minds.† At any rate, they are unfit for anything but going over the old ground, which they call *exact*. Indeed, the utmost merit of these exact men can be only to solve some mathematical problem which Newton or La Place has solved before them. When they come to the solution of natural facts (which in truth are as much facts as are the mathematical), they are utterly and wretchedly at fault. How truly has Warburton observed *(à propos* of one bad effect of confining the attention to mathematical studies), "He who is conversant only with certainties is unfitted for sifting and balancing what alone he will meet with in the world—probabilities; there being

* These words are the Reviewer's, "every line,

"For heaven's sake, Reader, take them not for mine !"

I have only changed "upholders of," to "detractors from."

† If I accused our adversaries of downright insincerity, it would be no more than *Lex talionis*. So little can some men conceive of real earnestness, that I have been asked in private, "But tell me now—do you *really* believe in Mesmerism ?"

no worse practical men than those who require more evidence than is necessary."* Give Mesmerism the benefit of this wise remark, and where are its opponents? Besides, for a vital science, Mesmerism has all the certainty and fixedness which any science, not mathematical, demands. It has its own methods of induction: it has decided characteristics: it shews the same features all over the world. The wonder is, having so much to do with the variable being of man, that in its results it should be so invariable.

Away then with the folly of leaving Mesmerism unstudied because it has no fixity. Though time "cannot stale its infinite variety," though in its height and amplitude it reaches to heaven, it still walks safely, and with sure feet, on earth.

"Ambulat in terrâ, caput inter nubila condit."

Let "the incapable and presumptuous" write muddy essays on metaphysical powers, which are nothing *ad rem:* Mesmerism shall start a spirit as well as Suggestion. Let Quarterly, or any other Reviews, conclude their empty peal with "Dominant Ideas,"—we will give a cheer for Mesmerism instead.

Be of good courage, ye true-hearted! The big awkward whale that has floundered into our seas is in its death-flurry, and all the foam and froth that it stirs up about it is but the lashing of its expiring tail.

And so, Reader, I bid you heartily farewell.

* *Life of T. Moore.* By Lord John Russell.

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